

JP 11/11/98



# THE INDEPENDENT

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THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER 1998

(1R50p) 45p

**Should I tell my parents I blame them?** DILEMMAS, PAGE 10  
**Clooney – a real movie star at last** FILM, PAGE 12

**Helping boys to do better at school**



IN THE THURSDAY REVIEW

IN THE EDUCATION TABLETOP

## Anita Gonzalez lost her family in the Pinochet years. For her, and countless others, justice was done yesterday

THE HOUSE of Lords made legal history yesterday by ruling that General Augusto Pinochet was not immune from prosecution as a former head of state.

The decision by the five law lords left the way open for the former Chilean dictator and life senator to be extradited to Spain on charges of mass murder, terrorism and torture.

Their judgment was delivered to a packed House amid gasps of astonishment. By a majority of three to two the law lords decided that former heads of state can be held accountable by foreign courts for human rights abuses committed against their citizens.

In the process they took the almost unprecedented step of overturning the judgment of the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, who had ruled in the High Court that the former dictator, who was 63 yesterday, did enjoy the benefit of immunity.

BY KIM SENGUPTA

are above the law." The lawyer Geoffrey Bindman, who represented Amnesty International and some of the general's victims, said the ruling was the "most important case in human rights law this century".

Conservative politicians, past and present, demanded that General Pinochet be freed by the Government. Baroness Thatcher, who had tea with him before his arrest, said: "The Senator is old, frail and sick, and on compassionate grounds alone should be allowed to return to Chile. I also remain convinced that the national interests of both Chile and Britain would be best served by releasing him, which the Home Secretary has it in his power to do."

Sir Norman Fowler, the Tories' home affairs spokesman, who had asked for legal proceedings to be ended after General Pinochet's High Court victory called for a statement from Jack Straw.

He said: "Wouldn't it be right for us to be able to question the Home Secretary on the use of what everyone agrees is very wide discretion. There are many people in this country and Chile who feel this affair has gone on for long enough and that the way forward is for the Home Secretary to use his discretion and bring these proceedings to an end."

A preliminary hearing into the Spanish extradition proceedings over General Pinochet is due to be heard before Bow Street magistrates in London next Wednesday. The request from Madrid based on investigations carried out by the investigating judge, Baltasar Garzon, and backed by the Spanish government accuses the general of complicity in torture, kidnapping and murder of political opponents including Spanish citizens.

The Home Secretary has also lying on his desk extradition requests for the former dictator from Switzerland, France and Belgium. He can decide the



Anita Gonzalez, who lost her husband, two sons and daughters-in-law, is hugged by her daughter Patricia Recabarren in Santiago after hearing the legal ruling EPA

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## Agent tried to cream off £125,000 in transfer deal at Venables club

A FIFA-REGISTERED football agent attempted to cream off £125,000 from a transfer deal involving a club controlled by the former England coach Terry Venables.

Tom Lawrence asked the Swedish club Elfsborg to accept £200,000 from Portsmouth FC for the striker Mathias Svensson – then told the Swedes to send £125,000 back to his solicitor in England.

The Swedish board was expecting to receive only £75,000 for the player, so it tipped off Portsmouth officials, who cut Mr Lawrence out of the deal and paid the lower asking price.

Mr Lawrence's solicitor, Stephen Carter, confirmed details of the arrangement to The

Independent last night, saying it was an attempt by his client to make as much money as possible.

The transfer took place in December 1996 while Mr Venables was chairman of Portsmouth and two months before he bought the struggling club for just £1. Svensson had been found by the Portsmouth scout, Ted Buxton, so Kjell Hallen, the Elfsborg deputy chairman, was reluctant to deal with an outside agent.

"It was a curious situation," said Mr Hallen. "We had more than one agent claiming to be involved, but one, Strata Sports [Mr Lawrence's company], told

us we would be receiving £200,000 and we were to send £125,000 back to England. There were a lot of letters and faxes and promises at the time and I was very upset and angry."

On December, Mr Hallen, who was then deputy chairman, and his chairman, Ake Larsson, wrote to Paul Weld, the Portsmouth club secretary, saying: "It is [sic] too much people involved in this transfer. As we told you Friday, our amount is £75,000 once [and] for all."

Three days later, apparently under pressure from Mr Lawrence, Elfsborg wrote: "We have no agreement with all these agents. The only thing we have promised is if we get £200,000 from you we keep

£75,000 and sent the rest to Carter & Co [the Strata solicitors]. These agents cannot demand payment from us if we only get £75,000 from you – we have checked this with our union and our lawyer."

This is not the first time that Mr Lawrence and Strata Sports Marketing have been involved in a controversial transfer deal. Two weeks ago, The Independent revealed that Crystal Palace, now managed by Mr Venables, had agreed to pay £1.35m for two Chinese players, £400,000 more than the Chinese authorities were expecting to receive.

Mr Lawrence was involved in that deal. So was Mr Buxton, who discovered Svensson; he

found the Chinese players, Fan Zhiyi and Sun Jihai. The two sides are now reconciled, with the Chinese due to receive the higher amount.

After being cut out of the Svensson deal, Mr Lawrence submitted a bill for £58,750 for his services in "finding" the player. When the club refused to pay, he submitted three invoices for scouting charges which, added together, amounted to £58,750. Several months later, the club reached a final settlement of £20,000 for all his outstanding claims.

Asked why an attempt was made by Mr Lawrence to route £125,000 back to England, Mr Carter, his solicitor, said: "I think the simple explanation is

that the 10 per cent figure put on agents' fees is a misnomer – it varies from transaction to transaction. It is a business where there are a tremendous amount of abortions ... and I think this was an attempt to derive as much from the transaction as possible."

He said the proceeds were to have been split between Mr Lawrence and a Swedish-based Yugoslav agent who was not registered with Fifa, world football's governing body.

"It strikes me as a fairly standard business arrangement except it took place against the messy background that is football."

Mr Lawrence declined to comment.

### CENTRAL AMERICA HURRICANE APPEAL

No-one can have missed the distressing pictures showing the misery brought about when Hurricane Mitch swept through Central America. 12,000 dead, up to 2 million made homeless, crops destroyed, roads and bridges swept away, whole communities lost.

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THE THURSDAY REVIEW













**BY ANDREW GRICE**  
Political Editor

A row will break out when the forum discusses the rules under which it will operate at its meeting at Labour's Millbank headquarters in London on Saturday. Mr Blair will be accused of "neutering" the new body by "fixing" its recommendations to the conference.

The agenda for Saturday's meeting reveals that party officials want to curb the power of forum members to change draft reports before they are sent to the conference. The officials recommend that pro-



When the new system was set up last year, the leadership promised the forum would be allowed to submit "minority

Labour sources insisted the new system was more democratic and would give ordinary members an input into policy-making. "This year has seen unprecedented involvement of members," one official said.

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\_\_\_\_\_

**BY STEVE CONNOR**  
Science Editor

colleague Christine Farquhar, said pentosan polysulphate "should be taken seriously" as

IVCSJ, such as the children of those who developed the disease or people who received blood transfusions, could be offered the drug with informed consent, he said.

## BRIEF

## Museums 'short of space'

ONLY 3 per cent of Britain's museums have enough storage space and most do not employ conservation specialists, the first comprehensive report on the state of museums showed yesterday. More than two out of three museums lacked a disaster plan to protect and rescue collections if there was an emergency, according to the report, *Museum Focus*.

## Babies injured in hospital

**AN INVESTIGATION** that began in July after a 10-day-old baby boy was found with a broken leg in hospital has revealed that two other infants suffered injuries in the same neonatal unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, Essex.

## Consumers complaining more

CONSUMERS ARE more likely than ever to complain about goods and services thanks to a "watchdog culture", says research from the Henley Centre. They found that 56 per cent of people had complained in the past year. That was up on the 37 per cent who complained previously.

## Mars rejects mouse charge

**THE CONFECTIONERY** firm Mars denied a breach of food regulations after a woman in London found part of a mouse in a Tropic bar. Horseferry Road magistrates were told the rodent was imported in Turkish nuts for which Mars could not be held responsible. The case was adjourned.

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# COMET

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## Mother is questioned as girl recovers from 28-hour ordeal

CHARLOTTE JONES, the three-year-old girl discovered in woodland 28 hours after going missing, was recovering in hospital yesterday as doctors marvelled at how she had survived her ordeal.

She sat up in bed at Warrington General Hospital in Cheshire and opened presents from local police who had feared the worst. She appeared to be back to her "bubbly" self playing and chatting with the nurses.

Dr Nick Wild, clinical director of childhealth for Warrington Hospital NHS Trust, was surprised by Charlotte's resilience.

He said the fact that the little girl had spent the night in the woods, where ground temperatures do not drop quite as low as in exposed areas, may have helped her to survive "what was a potentially life-threatening episode".

She was reported missing by her mother, Michelle, at 6pm on Monday. Ms Jones, 24, a stu-

BY CLARE GARNER

dent, told police that she had last seen her daughter at 5.15pm as they waved goodbye to a social worker at the gate to their house.

Police arrested Ms Jones shortly after they found Charlotte at 9.30pm on Tuesday. Last night, she remained in custody at Warrington police station, where detectives were still questioning her.

Warrington Borough Council is legally responsible for Charlotte's care. A spokesman said the council was working closely with her family and others to reach "the very best short-term decision - a decision that is right for Charlotte".

About 60 officers were involved in the search for Charlotte, which covered the area around her home, nearby waterways and buildings on open land.

As darkness fell on Tuesday night the prospects of finding her alive were reducing. Janet

Critchley, 29, a police child protection officer, described how the fog was coming down and she and her colleague, Detective Constable Mark Toker, were preparing for a long night when she heard a child's whimpers.

They fought their way through dense undergrowth in Gypsy Wood, three miles from Charlotte's home and found her crying and shivering as she sat in the middle of a patch of brambles.

"She was wet and there were no signs of any food," said Constable Critchley, adding that she thought Charlotte had been in the same position for a long time.

"She was upset and distressed and looked very happy to see us... She just wanted to be picked up and my colleague wrapped her in his coat."

Charlotte was taken to the nearby home of Bill Ashcroft, 61. He said: "I was in the kitchen and I heard the CID man shout 'Bill, Bill'."

"I ran through and he was on the telephone and the little girl was on his knee... she was hugging him. She was very quiet and her eyes were watery. She looked really scared."

Constable Critchley, who visited Charlotte in hospital yesterday, said that "she was very clingy with her family".

She added: "I gave her a Po telehubby, gave her a hug and she was smiling."

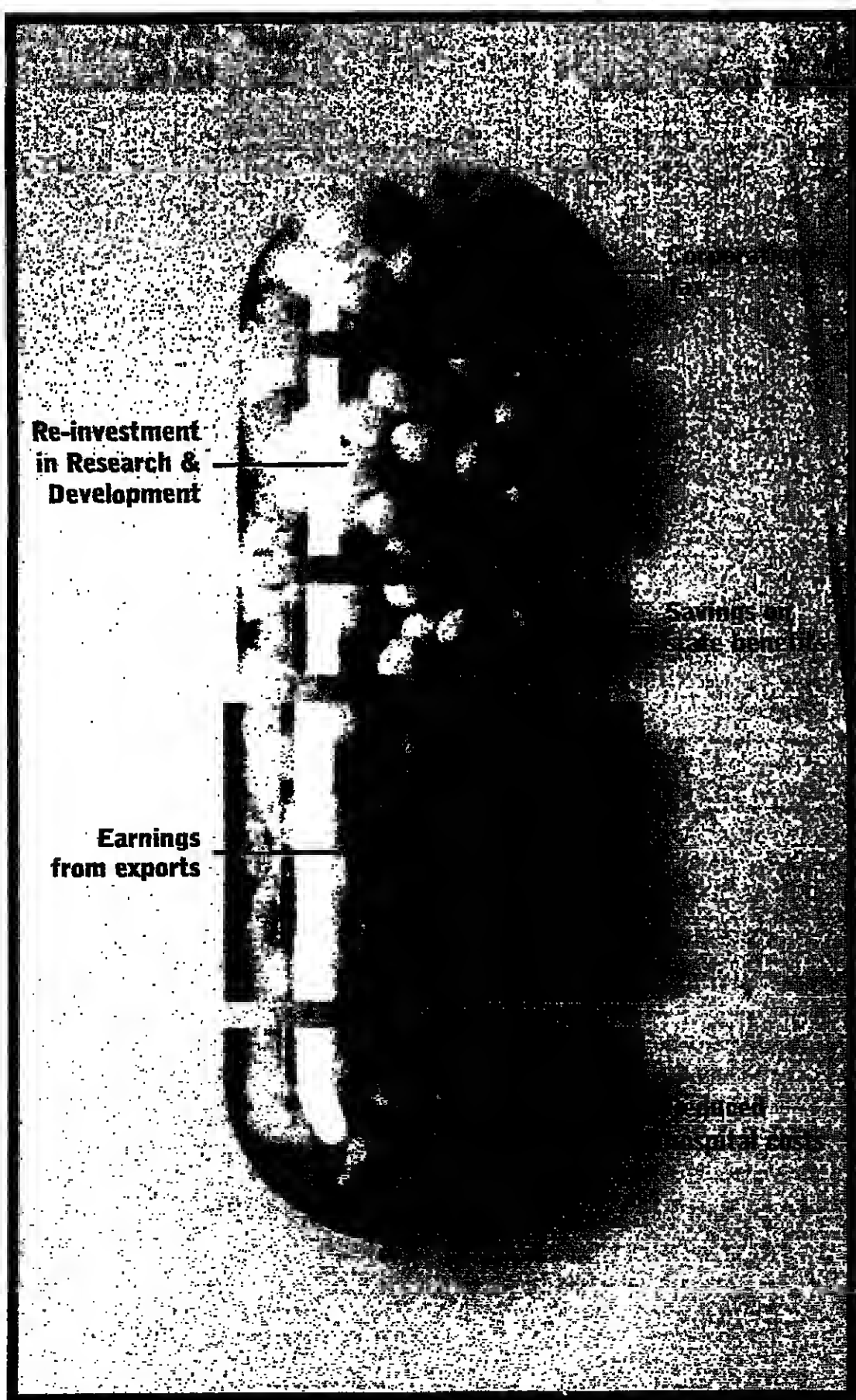
Charlotte has a large number of scratches and abrasions to her face, hands, legs and feet in addition to "cold injuries" to her hands and feet. "They have been exposed. I think she must have taken her shoes and socks off," Dr Wild said.

He added that it was difficult to speculate on any long-term psychological damage Charlotte may have suffered, but said that if she had enjoyed a relatively trauma-free life he imagined she would get over the incident in the "goodness of time".



Three-year-old Charlotte Jones, who went missing from her Warrington home on Monday night, recovering in hospital yesterday with Constable Janet Critchley (standing), who found her, and her aunt, Yvonne Jones

# Sickness Benefit.



This year, the National Health Service will spend £6 billion on medicines - about 25 pence per person per day.

In return, the pharmaceutical industry will re-invest some 20% of its annual turnover in the search for new and improved medicines.

This investment will benefit the National Health Service by helping to reduce hospital admissions and saving over £10 billion a year on patient care.

The value of medicines goes far beyond supporting the NHS. The pharmaceutical industry provides employment for more than 300,000 people and exports over £5 billion of medicines a year, producing one of the country's largest trade surpluses of £2 billion.

Over the past five years pharmaceutical companies have committed over £2 billion in capital investment, and more is planned.

The benefit of the industry is also felt within the Treasury as pharmaceutical companies in Britain pay hundreds of millions of pounds in Corporation Tax each year.

But perhaps the industry is least known for its investment in education, funding half of all post-graduate training for GPs and supporting universities to the tune of £100 million a year.

If all this good work is not encouraged, it wouldn't just be the industry that would fall sick. It would be the country.

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry  
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TAKE CARE OF AN INDUSTRY THAT TAKES CARE OF BRITAIN

## Strains show in peace process

THE NORTHERN Ireland peace process showed ominous signs of strain yesterday as Tony Blair's round of talks with political parties in Belfast served to expose differences between important elements.

In particular, David Trimble, the First Minister designate, differed sharply and publicly with his deputy, Seamus Mallon, of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, on how to move the process forward.

When Mr Mallon signalled that he believed movement within 10 days was all but imperative, Mr Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionists, castigated him for what he described as unhelpfully generating artificial deadlines.

A clear fault-line has thus developed between the two key political figures, who are supposed to be working together to make the peace process succeed. While they have diverged before now, it has become obvious that they have proved unable to reconcile their positions on a crucial and fundamental issue.

Mr Blair spent much of the day meeting a succession of parties before journeying to Dublin where today he will address a joint meeting of the two houses of the Irish parliament. The Prime Minister said later that he had had a good series of discussions, and that progress could be made.

He added: "I want all this Agreement implemented as soon as possible. All the issues connected with decommissioning and the executive were talked about, we thrashed through them."

"I'm going to do everything I can to push it on, to keep the momentum going forward, because I know the people out there are just desperate for this thing to work. I'm going to keep on this very, very hard"

Les Rodgers, chairman of the Northern Ireland Police Federation, said Mr Blair had been shocked and taken aback by the plight of police families.

He added: "I think he had his eyes opened. I don't think he realised to what depth people would go to intimidate officers and their families - blast bombs and petrol bombs thrown at houses, thugs gathering outside houses, all while the men were away at Drumcree."

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK  
Ireland Correspondent

indeed over these coming days."

Mr Trimble and the Sinn Féin president, Gerry Adams, meanwhile exchanged attacks during the day. The Unionist leader saying society had invested too much in the process "to allow it to be destroyed by a handful of unreconstructed militarists in the republican movement". Mr Adams, in turn, accused Unionists of attempting to exercise a veto, and of "childish tactics, childish antics and blatant stalling tactics".

Earlier, Mr Mallon had warned that unless real progress was made very soon "then the potential for this whole experiment to crack up is much greater than people realise". Unless there was movement, the process would be in great danger of losing credibility, he added.

Mr Trimble's response was to declare: "It is not helpful to generate a sense of crisis where none exists. Nor is it helpful to try to generate artificial deadlines when there aren't deadlines in the process." The Unionist leader later added, in what appeared to be an attempt to soothe things down, that periodic disagreements between himself and Mr Mallon were only to be expected.

He added: "I think he had his eyes opened. I don't think he realised to what depth people would go to intimidate officers and their families - blast bombs and petrol bombs thrown at houses, thugs gathering outside houses, all while the men were away at Drumcree."

### MILLENNIUM BUG WATCH

TAKING ACTION against the millennium bug can sometimes create more problems than it appears to solve. Just ask the staff at John Radcliffe Hospital, one of the biggest in Oxford, which recently upgraded the software which controls its 2,300-line switchboard to cope with the year 2000.

When the software was installed, the system collapsed, leaving only 69 extensions working. In a desperate scramble, lines were reallocated; two for Accident & Emergency, and one each for every other ward. Other hospitals were put on alert to receive emergency admissions.

The problems, which began on the Sunday morning,

continued until 3.10am the next day, while BT was called in to set up an emergency switchboard.

When engineers tried to get to the root of the trouble, they found that it was not the software that was faulty after all. The process of installing the software had triggered a hidden problem in the printed circuit boards holding the hardware that made up the switchboard.

CHARLES ARTHUR

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DEPENDENT  
November 1998



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AVID McKITTRICK  
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CHARLES MATHIE

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have; hence the 'buy one get one free' coupon. Buy one bottle of Lanson Black Label N.V. for £18.99 and we will give you a second one that's even better. Why? Because it's free of course.



bin there done that



## Redwood hotly denies holding talks with bathroom sponge

WHAT GENIUS of melodrama arranged for the announcement of the law lords' ruling on General Pinochet's appeal? Surely serendipity alone could not have marshalled the occasion so perfectly, first of all ensuring the verdict would arrive on the old villain's birthday, then procuring the perfect sequence for the individual judgments to be read out. In dramatic terms the hearing has been rather like the kind of experimental theatre favoured by German directors of a sadistic bent – a celebration of enigma in which old atrocities mingled surreally with the picking of legal nits. In the early days, though, the subject

matter alone guaranteed that it was something of a hot ticket, with various celebrity politicians turning up to listen, staying for just long enough to realise that they had not the faintest idea what any of it meant, and then departing for something a little more vaudeville. *Kavanagh QC* it wasn't. The main body of the audience, whether they were the claque of Pinochetists in cashmere and silk or the rather more coarsely fibrous group of protesters, were doggedly attentive, but even they couldn't pretend it was easy stuff to sit through.

The denouement couldn't have been more different. Imagine the

scene: five sage and eminent lawyers must hand down the verdicts which will decide an old man's fate. Justice has covered her eyes, not out of impartiality but because she can hardly bear to look. Then the most senior law lord steps up to the penalty spot and takes his kick. It goes wide and so does the next. The crowd thrills and slumps according to its sympathies. They think it's all over. But then the next ball goes in. And the next. It's all down to the final shot and when that bellies the netting the place gives a collective gasp, unanimous only in its sense of unexpected reversal. Celebration has turned instant-

### THE SKETCH



THOMAS  
SUTCLIFFE

ly to grief, commiseration to congratulation. Hardly surprising that the Commons couldn't match it

for drama, although it wasn't exactly a dull day in the House. It was Mr Mandelson's turn to speak in the debate on the Queen's Speech and he began with an effective sting, attributing to Mr Redwood a dis- obliging remark about Mr Hague, to the effect that he had had "more interesting conversations with a bathroom sponge". Mr Redwood went puce and leapt to his feet to deny that any such words had ever passed his lips. He held the right honourable sponge in the highest regard. He went even puer when reminded of his view that the Conservatives had considered all the leadership candidates and elected

the worst. Never said it, protested Mr Redwood, but his denial had the sort of hot-faced fluster that confirms suspicions rather than dispels them. "What a way to speak of your leader," continued Mr Mandelson. "We wouldn't get away with it in our party. The men in the dark would never allow it."

It didn't all go Mr Mandelson's way, though. John Bercow, the Tories' bouncing bomb, celebrated his naming as Backbencher of the Year by repeatedly leaping to his feet to ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to give way. Mr Mandelson declined. This wasn't a good idea. Mr Bercow relishes a

challenge and began to ask it ever- decreasing intervals, occasionally letting his frustrated zeal issue as little yelps of condemnation. "You're useless!" he shouted. "You're fat!"

Mr Mandelson punished him by taking interventions from every- body else with increasingly sar- castic courtesy. Had David Blunkett's dog been in the chamber she would have stood a better chance of getting Mr Mandelson to sit down, but Mr Bercow didn't give up. It took him far too long, but Mr Mandelson finally realised that if you have a thorn in your heel it is usually best to put your feet up for a while and let it work itself out.

## Worker rights likely to be watered down

GOVERNMENT PLANS to increase trade union rights in the workplace are likely to be watered down to meet employers' concerns, Peter Mandelson hinted yesterday.

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry told Labour MPs during a debate on the Queen's Speech that he was "willing to give reassurance" to employers anxious about the impact of the Fairness at Work Bill on their businesses.

"We want to ensure that the proposals work well and strike a fair balance and, yes, to give reassurance, where this is justified, to employers who are understandably concerned about the impact of this legislation on their businesses," he said.

Under pressure from the Confederation of British Industry, the Downing Street Policy Unit has urged that workers should be members of a union for at least 12 months before they are counted towards recognition.

Unions believe they have successfully resisted the idea of a two-tier membership, but they may have lost the battle to

### TRADE UNIONS

BY SARAH SCHAEFER

scrap the upper limit on the amount of compensation for unfair dismissal. The present ceiling of £12,000 is likely to be increased to £40,000 or £50,000.

As part of the drive to make Britain the best environment to trade electronically, Mr Mandelson announced the appointment of a "high-ranking digital envoy" who would ensure that businesses and consumers take "maximum advantage" of the Internet. "This person will speak for the UK in the international area to promote the UK as a global hub for electronic commerce, business and investment, and to drive forward the cross-government strategy for electronic commerce," he said.

Mr Mandelson pledged that "if and when" Britain joined the European single currency there should be more than "artificial convergence". But John Redwood, the Conservative spokesman on trade, accused him of failing to mention job losses, or the crisis in manu-

facturing industry, because all ministers were interested in was "abolishing hereditary peers. People out there are not clamouring for reform of the House of Lords. They are demanding more jobs, better schools, better hospitals and this Queen's Speech does absolutely nothing to stop the collapse in manufacturing which we see going on day by day," he said.

John Major, the former Conservative prime minister, reflected on Britain's entry into the European single currency, and said: "Tony Blair used to accuse me of sitting on the fence when it came to setting out a clear policy, he is now sitting on the adjacent spike."

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, was rebuked by the Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, for saying he would not be present for the debate. But he changed his plans after Miss Boothroyd said it was her "personal feeling" that Mr Blunkett should be present unless he was dealing with a matter of the "utmost urgency elsewhere".



Tory leader William Hague celebrating at the Savoy in London yesterday after being voted Parliamentarian of the Year by a panel of political journalists. Neville Elder

## 'Sharks feed on inventors'

CORPORATE "SHARKS", expensive patenting and a narrow education system are crippling Britain's finest inventors, a group of leading entrepreneurs told MPs yesterday.

Trevor Baylis, the inventor of the clockwork radio, David Potter, chairman of Psion plc, and the computer pioneer Sir Clive Sinclair told the Commons science and technology committee that business costs meant that home-grown ideas were often developed abroad.

Mr Baylis said more state aid was vital to maintain the British tradition of lone inventors. "My problem was that when I first had my idea, I had no help with preparing a business plan.

TECHNOLOGY  
BY PAUL WAUGH  
Political Correspondent

patenting or even the astronomical cost of translation of patents. Without that help, how can a fellow protect himself from predators?"

Mr Potter, whose company now employs 1,200 staff thanks to the success of its personal organiser, said Britain suffered from a "cultural" problem with applied science that contrasted sharply with the US belief in "the dignity of practical knowledge".

Sir Clive said it was appalling that 50 per cent of all new products originated as British ideas but were developed overseas.

### THE HOUSE

#### UN condemned

GEORGE GALLOWAY, the Labour MP for Glasgow Kelvin, stunned MPs when he condemned the United Nations for causing a "quiet massacre" in Iraq through sanctions.

Dismissing challenges to explain what the West should do against Saddam Hussein, the MP spoke of the "little echoes of Tel Aviv in the chamber". He added: "A walk through the vale of tears that is Iraq is almost too much for the ordinary mortal to bear. So

searing is the grief, so traumatised are the population, so enraged are the people with whom we say we have no quarrel."

#### Tourism fears

THE GOVERNMENT shows "precious little concern" for the tourism industry and has turned guest houses in seaside resorts into over-spill DSS hostels for asylum seekers, Nigel Waterson, the Tory MP for Eastbourne said, accusing Labour of delaying a tourism strategy.

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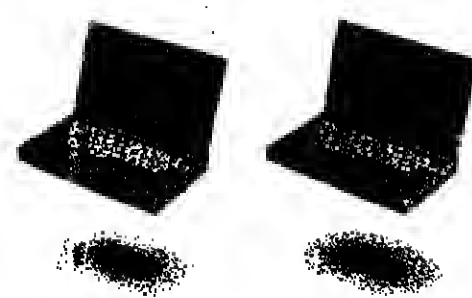
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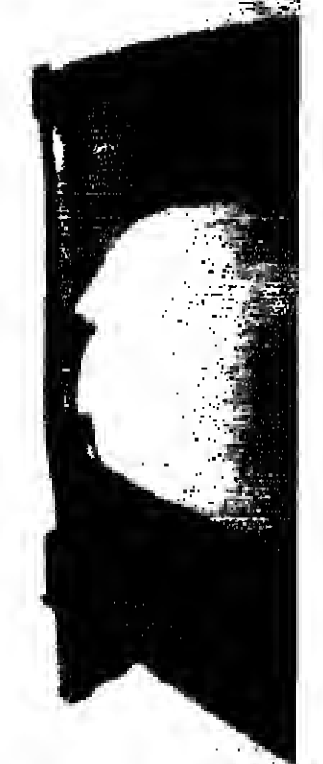
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INDEPENDENT  
January 1998

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## BBC vows to banish old sitcoms

**TITTER YE NOT** - the BBC is no longer amused by the sight of trousers falling down in front of a vicar. Comedies that rely on "suburban sofas and knitted pullovers" are to be banished from the screen.

Peter Salmon, the controller of BBC1, announced a new £30m investment in situation comedy yesterday, but promised to update a genre he admitted had been a weakness in recent years. "There are two things the public currently seem to like more than anything else," Mr Salmon told the Broadcasting Press Guild. "One is watching sitcoms, the other is saying how terrible they are."

"I am the net-curtain comedy killer," added Mr Salmon. "The man who took out a contract on suburban sofas, knitted

BY PAUL MCCANN  
Media Editor

ted pullovers, and will finally do for some of those dreary 1950s scenarios that have infected too many British comedies."

Mr Salmon said the channel was looking for comedies that "owed more to *Coronation Street* and *The Simpsons* than to *Ealing Comedies* and *Carry On* films".

He did not name the comedies that would be scrapped. But types of show like *Next of Kin*, where Penelope Keith played a reluctant grandmother, and *A Prince Among Men*, a comedy about social-climbing starring Chris Barrie, had had their day, he said. Both shows have ended. Mr Salmon pointed to the new Victoria



Shows such as 'Next of Kin', starring William Gaunt and Penelope Keith, are thought to be too old-fashioned

Wood show, *Dinner Ladies*, which attracted an audience of 11 million when it began last week, as an example of a new wave of sitcoms planned for the channel.

The £30m is a 50 per cent increase on last year and there

are a large number of new projects in the pipeline. After making *The Royle Family* for BBC2, Caroline Aherne is returning as Mrs Merton, in a show called *Mrs Merton and Malcolm*. It will be set in her Stockport home rather than

showing her interacting with a studio audience.

There is to be a new historical comedy called *Let Them Eat Cake*, set in pre-revolutionary France, starring Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders. *The Alan*

*Davies Show*, on Radio 4, is transferring to television.

Mark Addy, one of the stars of *The Full Monty*, is making the BBC's first American-based sitcom. In *Too Much Sun* he will play a debauched British actor in Hollywood.

## Hospital neglected, dying patient

A MAN with Legionnaire's disease who was left for hours in a blood-soaked bed waiting to be transferred to intensive care suffered an "unacceptable" delay in his treatment, the Health Service Ombudsman said yesterday.

The man, who had difficulty breathing and was in distress, needed a ventilation tube inserted before being transferred but had to wait six hours to be seen by an anaesthetist at Warrington General Hospital. His drip became dislodged and was not replaced for two hours, leaving him with bloodstained pyjamas and bedding. Abnormal test results, showing the oxygen level in his blood was low, were not acted on. He died two weeks later.

The case is among the first involving clinical judgement to be investigated by the ombudsman, Michael Buckley, whose powers were extended to include clinical matters in 1996. It highlights the extreme pressures on the NHS and the lottery faced by patients when there are not enough staff to care for all those who require immediate attention.

The man, Mr B, was admitted to hospital on 28 November 1996 and was visited by his family the following day. At 5.45pm a doctor told his wife, Mrs B, that he was in a critical condition and would have to be transferred to the intensive care unit of a neighbouring hospital. The doctor added that the following six hours would be crucial.

By this time Mr B had pneumonia, his breathing was laboured and he was becoming increasingly distressed. His two sons had to restrain him from removing his oxygen mask. Before he could be transferred he needed a tube inserted into his lungs so that he could be ventilated on the journey but no anaesthetist was available to carry this out until 11.45pm.

Mr Buckley did not criticise the anaesthetists involved in the case because the three who were on duty at Warrington hospital at the time were fully stretched attending to other very ill patients.

The hospital admitted the care provided was "sub-optimal" but said there was

BY JEREMY LAURANCE  
Health Editor

nothing it could have done differently in the circumstances and that Mr B's death could not have been avoided.

However, Mr Buckley criticised the hospital for failing to ensure there was direct communication between the medical and anaesthetic staff in such an emergency. Even if an earlier transfer would not have saved Mr B's life, it "would at least have meant that he was more comfortable and received sooner the level of care that he needed".

In separate cases, the ombudsman also criticised two GPs for striking patients off their lists unreasonably or precipitately. In a case in Scotland



Buckley: Investigation

a GP struck off a patient who had complained when he was given a prescription for a painkiller instead of the antibiotics that he had requested for a bout of flu. Mr Buckley did not criticise the GP's decision to withhold antibiotics but said he had acted in the heat of the moment in striking off the patient.

In the second case, a GP in Yorkshire struck off the parents of a woman who had removed herself from the list of a partner after a disagreement. The parents had been on their GP's list for many years without difficulty.

GPs have the legal right to strike patients off their list without giving a reason but Mr Buckley said in the particular circumstances of the two cases the GPs' actions were unreasonable and contravened the principles of good practice.

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# Nation turns increasingly to drink

BY GLENDA COOPER  
Social Affairs Correspondent

BRITONS ARE spending 40 per cent more on alcohol than they did 30 years ago, with wine and spirits becoming increasingly popular tipples, according to a new survey.

Drinking wine on foreign holidays, seeing a drink as a "cheap treat" and less public disapproval of women drinking are likely to be reasons behind the change in spending patterns.

The Government's latest annual Family Spending survey into "who's spending, how much, on what and where" shows that we are also changing what we drink as well as how much we consume.

While traditional beers and ciders still outsell wines and spirits, expenditure on them rose by only a quarter in real terms, while spending on wines and spirits increased by three-quarters in 30 years. The biggest rise in alcohol spending was in the 1970s and 1980s.

The poorest fifth of the population accounted for the biggest rise in alcohol spending, up 80 per cent, whereas for the richest fifth it rose by 35 per cent. "There is no obvious reason why spending on alcohol should have increased so much," said Denis Down, the report's editor.

"Probably it is down to increased incomes, but also changes in fashion. People are also getting used to wine on foreign holidays. It may also be seen as one of the cheaper luxuries, particularly for those on lower incomes. And it could be that drinking is now more acceptable amongst women than it used to be."

The largest rise in spending

## THE NATION'S SPENDING

- The average household spend is £329 a week.
- Household spending ranges from £96 to £720 between the poorest and richest families.
- Spending on housing has risen from 9 per cent to 16 per cent of total expenditure.
- Households spend on average £56 a week on food and £55 on leisure.
- Tobacco has fallen from 6 per cent to 2 per cent of total spending.
- Spending on alcohol has risen by 40 per cent over the past 30 years.
- More than 70 per cent say that they gamble, compared with 55 per cent in 1964-95.
- Spending on tea and coffee has doubled in the past 30 years, but by 1997-98 more was spent on coffee than on tea.
- Spending in the South-east is more than £60 above the UK average.
- Households in Wales and the North-east buy the fewest toiletries.

overall has been in housing, thanks not only to the growing numbers of those buying their own home, but the increasing passion for home improvement. As a percentage of total spending it is up from 9 per cent of total expenditure in 1968 to 16 per cent today, accounting for £51.50 per week.

While nearly all of the spend is due to rent, mortgage, council tax and water bills, 15 per cent is spent on maintenance, repairs and decorations. "Obviously part of the growth in proportion is the

increased number of mortgages," Mr Down said. "But the rise also includes DIY and we know that owner-occupiers are spending a lot on maintaining their houses."

Mr Down said the gap between rich and poor remains as wide as ever, with the richest spending 60 per cent more than they did 30 years ago compared to a rise in spending of only 13 per cent by the worst off.

The average weekly expenditure of households in the United Kingdom was £329, £20 up on last year. But spending varies from an average of £96 for the worst tenth of households compared with £720 for the highest tenth.

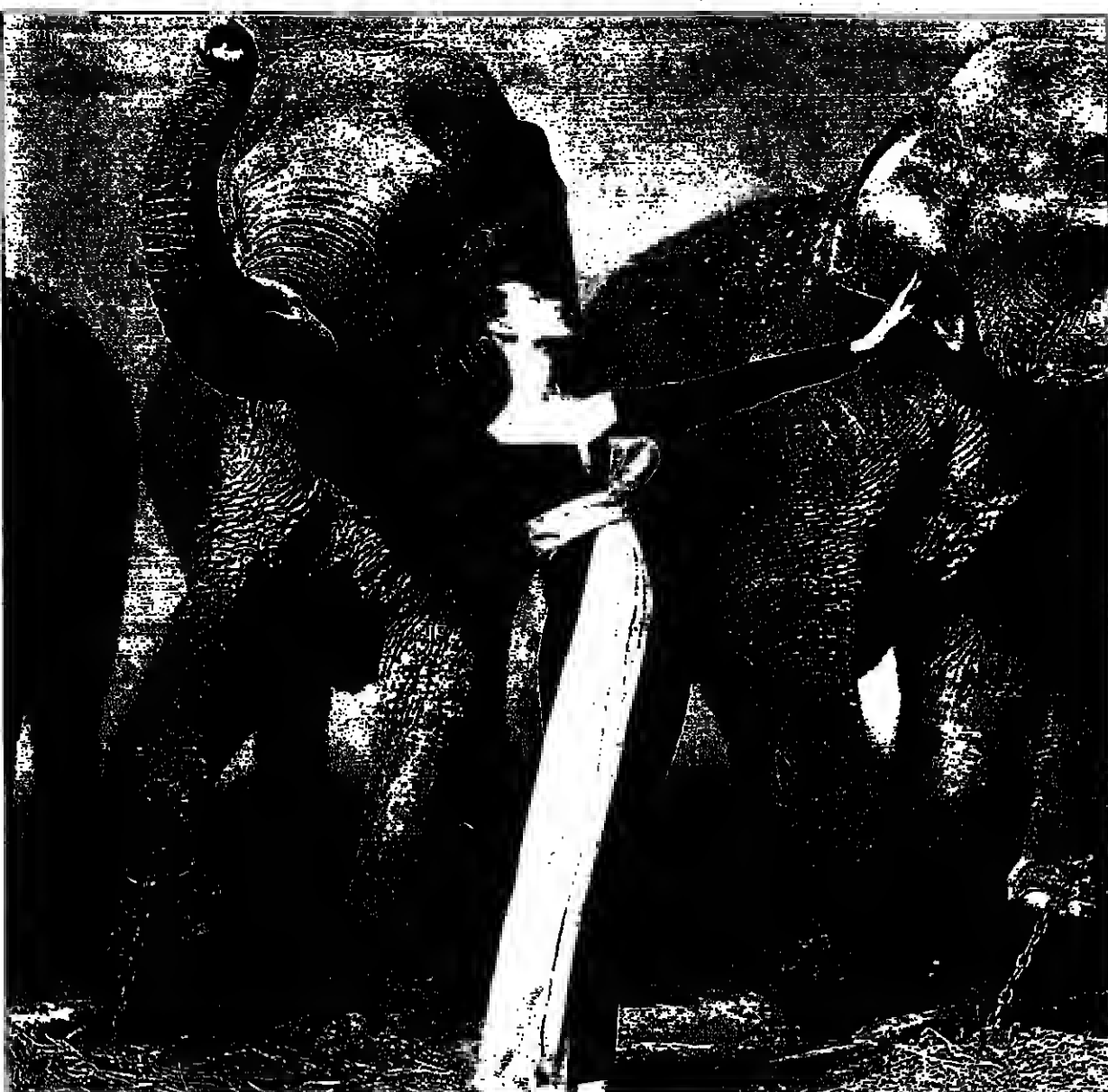
Lone parents are among the worst off, Mr Down said. Families headed by one parent spent about £200 a week - half of what families with two or more adults spent.

Thirty years ago food was by far the biggest drain on expenditure. But with the growth of the leisure society, Britons now spend only 80p a week more on essential nourishment than leisure goods and services.

The nation's love affair with consumer durables continues with most people now seeing them as a necessity. More than 80 per cent of all households now own a washing machine, more than 99 per cent have a refrigerator and 94 per cent own a telephone. Ownership of videos and CD players also continues to increase.

Spending on tobacco saw a "striking" decrease among the richest, from £18.50 a week to £8, as health messages started to take effect.

Family Spending 1997-98, is published by the Stationery Office; price £39.50



Richard Avedon's famous fashion photograph of 'Dovima with Elephants' which goes on display today as part of the 'Silver and Syrup' exhibition at the Canon Photography Gallery at London's Victoria and Albert Museum

## Inquest to rule on gold bounty

BY JANE HUGHES

IT IS the stuff treasure hunters' dreams are made of. Nigel Wilding and his father-in-law, John Sutton, were scouring a beach in East Yorkshire when they claim, they discovered a rare gold sword pommel thought to be worth hundreds of thousands of pounds.

While Mr Sutton swept the beach with his £500 hi-tech metal detector, Mr Wilding chanced upon the pommel using his father-in-law's spare, a second-hand children's detector bought at a car boot sale.

Indeed it was only a twist of fate that saw 35-year-old Mr Wilding pick up the detector at all. He had earlier been fishing but gave up after failing to catch anything. The men, both from the Hull area, say they found the early 7th-century Saxon pommel, believed to have belonged to a king, inside a clay boulder near Aldbrough last November. At first they thought it was part of a cigarette lighter.

A treasure trove inquest is being held in Hull to investigate the circumstances of the find and determine ownership.

Craig Barclay, acting senior curator of the Yorkshire Museum in York, said the pommel, which is less than 2in long, has a bronze centre with 81 per cent gold filigree sheathing over it. "It is undoubtedly of national importance," he added.

The inquest was due to be heard earlier this year, but was adjourned for further inquiries after a letter arrived, expressing concerns about the time and location of the find. There were then several challenges to the men's claims about where the pommel was found, including one from the Centre for Wetland Archaeology.

Under the 1996 Treasure Act, a reward may be paid to the finder, the occupier of the land where it was found and anyone with an interest in the land. The inquest continues today.

## Brent Spar break-up begins

THE LAST act of the Brent Spar saga began yesterday when Shell, owner of the giant oil-storage buoy, began to dismantle it in a Norwegian fjord.

It was the company's final retreat from plans to sink the 14,500-tonne rig in the Atlantic, which the Greenpeace environmental pressure group defeated in a blaze of world-wide publicity in 1995.

Yesterday, one of the world's largest floating cranes began removing the 1,600-tonne top-side and the control and accommodation superstructure,

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHEY  
Environment Correspondent

which will be scrapped. The tubular hull of the Spar will then be cut into metal rings, which will be filled with ballast and used to form a ferry quay at Melkjarvik, near Stavanger.

Shell's land-based disposal of the rig will take a year and cost £43m, compared with the £4.5m bill for dumping it in the ocean.

Greenpeace saw that plan as a test case of how all maritime oil rigs should be disposed of and deployed its skill at eye-

catching protest to fight it, occupying the Spar from helicopters and boats. Protests escalated and Shell, faced with an international boycott of its petrol stations, abandoned its plan.

Its change of heart embarrassed John Major, then prime minister, who had sided with Shell.

The rig has been moored in deep Norwegian fjords for the past three years, and is now in Yrkjefjord, north of Stavanger.

In July the oil-exploring countries of the North Sea and

North Atlantic, including Britain, agreed that all oil platforms in the sea would be brought ashore for disposal, except the largest. Britain's agreement will cost the UK oil industry £9bn.

Chris Rose, Greenpeace's programme director, said yesterday: "The real significance of the campaign was that one of the largest companies in the world had to change its plan very publicly because it did not fit with the values of its customers and of the public."

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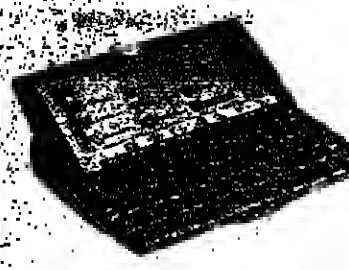
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## THE NATIONAL NETWORK: WHICH COMPANIES ARE GETTING THERE AND WHICH ARE SHOWING THE STRAIN?

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|  <p>Runs fast trains to East Anglia. Punctuality fell in all seven route groups with one triggering discounts under the Passengers' Charter. Recently raised the standards in its charter, offering better compensation and higher service standards.</p> <p>■ Parent: GB Railways; route miles: 348; passenger journeys: 5.99 million</p> |  <p>Serving south Welsh valleys. A bad offender in the recent figures, with late-running falling from 6 per cent to almost 13 per cent, triggering discounts, while reliability slipped. Recent heavy flooding is likely to lead to a worsening in figures.</p> <p>■ Parent: Prism; route miles: 86; passenger journeys: 6.1 million</p> |  <p>Sprawling West Midlands commuter network. Last week revised the "leaves on the line" story, blaming the autumnal leaf fall for recent problems. Most recent figures show improving timekeeping and reliability.</p> <p>■ Parent: National Express; route miles: 1,495; passenger journeys: 32.4m</p>  |  <p>Commuter services to London, from northern Home Counties. Ordered to give back £2.5m to regular passengers after slump in performance. Company claimed it was due to engineering problems. Thinking of cutting a tenth of peak timetable.</p> <p>■ Parent: M40 Trains route miles: 163; passenger journeys: 8.8 million</p>    |  <p>Commuter services to Surrey and to Sussex Coast. Was refused permission to extend franchise to 15 years in exchange for phasing out ageing slam door stock - to the delight of passenger groups. Improved performance across all route groups.</p> <p>■ Parent: Generale des Eaux; route miles: 481; passenger journeys: 117.2 million</p> |  <p>Commuter services to Kent and Sussex. New Networker trains have caused most of its problems. Under franchise commitment to phase out all slam-door stock. Its Kent-Link group is the weakest, and triggered discounts for delays.</p> <p>■ Parent: Generale des Eaux; route miles: 444; passenger journeys: 93 million</p> |  <p>Sprawling network of inter-city lines. Unable to deliver at many pinch points on the network. Also blames weather conditions. Inherited the majority of the older inter-city stock on privatisation. Latest performance triggered passenger discounts.</p> <p>■ Parent: Virgin; route miles: 1,657; passenger journeys: 12.5 million</p> |   |
|  <p>Runs commuter services to Essex and Suffolk. Disastrous performance last winter - at one stage, only 50 per cent of its services ran to schedule. One in ten trains are late and five in ten are cancelled.</p> <p>■ Parent: FirstGroup; route miles: 164; passenger journeys: 51.6 million</p>  |  <p>Inherited best trains and most recently upgraded lines. Improved reliability recently but one in 10 trains are late. Has put in a bid to have its franchise extended in exchange for investment including 12 new tilting trains.</p> <p>■ Parent: Sea Containers; route miles: 850; passenger journeys: 13.7 million</p>             |  <p>Earned tag of Late Western because of initial problems. Blamed lack of maintenance - the contractor, Arney, eventually resigned. More than 16 per cent of trains run late and reliability is falling. Has paid out £500,000 under the incentive regime.</p> <p>■ Parent: Prism; route miles: 850; passenger journeys: 16.4 million</p>                              |  <p>Lost its sobriquet of the M40 Line after investment and effort by owners. Recently agreed to a £16m package of benefits to regular passengers in exchange for being allowed to keep the hated slam-door trains running for three extra years.</p> <p>■ Parent: Prism; route miles: 80.25; passenger journeys: 23.7 million</p> |  <p>Has been hit by a series of walk-outs by drivers. Latest figures showed the firm was almost the only operator to have improved reliability and punctuality across all routes. Praised by the franchising director for improving performance.</p> <p>■ Parent: MTL; route miles: 75; passenger journeys: 23 million</p>                     |  <p>Uses InterCity high-speed trains on a single route to Leeds, through the East Midlands. Reliability and punctuality have remained stable at levels exceeding those laid down in the Passengers' Charter standard.</p> <p>■ Parent: National Express; route miles: 307; passenger journeys: 6.3 million</p>                 |  <p>The rebranded Regional Railways North Eastern. Suffered acute shortage of drivers that prompted cancellations in the early days. Recent figures show an indifferent performance with poor reliability and punctuality on many of its route groups.</p> <p>■ Parent: MTL; route miles: 1,277; passenger journeys: 27 million</p>          |   |
|  <p>Its sleeper service in the west is the only one to claim 100 per cent reliability. Overall, reliability is up on all its routes, while punctuality is above Charter standard. Praised by the franchising director.</p> <p>■ Parent: National Express; route miles: 1,885; passenger journeys: 56.7 million</p>                         |  <p>Runs commuter trains from Midlands to London. Suffered too many drivers redundant. Blames Railtrack. Is worried group will be stunted by lack of capacity if Virgin takes the lion's share of routes on the upgraded West Coast main line.</p> <p>■ Parent: National Express; route miles: 206; passenger journeys: 30.7 million</p> |  <p>Narrowly avoided a £1m fine for cancelling services after it made too many drivers redundant. Latest punctuality figures brought it perilously close to triggering discounts although reliability has improved sharply.</p> <p>■ Parent: Stagecoach (which also runs eight-mile line on the Isle of Wight); route miles: 284; passenger journeys: 118.2 million</p> |  <p>Punctuality plunged so badly this year that it was fined £800,000. Latest figures showed delays increased from 8 per cent to more than 15 per cent, triggering discounts for passengers. Blamed delays on Railtrack.</p> <p>■ Parent: Go-Ahead; route miles: 363; passenger journeys: 28.5 million</p>                         |  <p>Led the attack against Railtrack in the row over who is to blame for current problems throughout the country. Has a high level of punctuality and reliability on the service that runs through London from Bedford to Brighton.</p> <p>■ Parent: Go-Ahead; route miles: 141; passenger journeys: 30.2 million</p>                          |  <p>Immense network that links Swansea, Cardiff, Birmingham and Exeter. Performance varies widely across the network with three groups triggering discounts in the latest figures. One group runs 16 per cent of its trains late.</p> <p>■ Parent: Prism; route miles: 1,568; passenger journeys: 13.6 million</p>             |  <p>Runs services from East Anglia to London. Cut the price of annual tickets by 25 per cent to win Peterborough passengers from GNER. Its inter-city rival. Recent figures show performance is broadly on the increase.</p> <p>■ Parent: Prism; route miles: 257; passenger journeys: 52.8 million</p>                                      |   |
|  |   |  |  |   |   |   |  <p>Most hated railway, according to complaint figures. At one point half of all trains from London to Scotland were late. Has been improved to fewer than 15 per cent. New 140mph tilting trains will cut journey time to Glasgow by 50 minutes by 2005.</p> <p>■ Parent: Virgin; route miles: 676; passenger journeys: 14.99 million</p> |

## State may take over failing rail firms

THE GOVERNMENT will today warn rail companies that unless they improve it will strip them of their franchises and hand over their trains to the British Railway Board - effectively nationalising parts of the network.

BY PHILIP THORNTON  
Transport Correspondent

John Prescott will use a summit meeting with the train companies and Railtrack to hammer home his message that companies continuing to

provide an appalling service will have no future in the industry.

But the Deputy Prime Minister will also hold to a promise of extending the franchises for the firms with "constructive" proposals. He is determined to

see a tangible improvement in performance after his loss of face this week when the Bill to enact the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) was not given legislative time in this session. He will instead set up a shadow SRA and produce a draft Bill.

Mr Prescott, who is also Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions, will warn the 26 train companies that he can use powers to change the Government's guidance to the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising

(Opraf). The franchising director has powers to declare operators in breach of their franchise, but until now has preferred to negotiate a package of benefits for passengers.

Mr Prescott will tell operators that he is prepared to use powers under the British Railways Board to run trains. BRB is still in public hands and carries out residual duties, such as running the British Transport Police, but has never had its statutory powers revoked.

A source close to Mr Prescott said: "Opraf has been shown to want to negotiate packages of benefits rather than apply the letter of the law. But forcing the operator to cough up one or two platiudes is sending the wrong message."

South West Trains, North West Trains, Chiltern Railways and LTS Rail have all produced a package of benefits for passengers, such as new investment or refunds to season ticket holders, rather than face fines or tougher penalties.

Mr Prescott will make clear he is prepared to extend franchises for good performers but will not be blackmailed. "It would be very foolish of anybody to hold a gun to Mr Prescott's head because the guy with the biggest gun is John Prescott who can kick people out of the industry," said the source.

GNER has lodged a bid for extending its seven-year franchise in exchange for 12 new tilting trains - even though those are needed to cope with growing demand.

The same message will be given to Railtrack. It will be told that the Government wants more "direct leverage" over the company, which currently receives £1.6bn of taxpayers' money via access charge paid by the train companies. This could involve paying subsidy direct to Railtrack in exchange for specific targets.

Gerald Corbett, Railtrack's chief executive, has warned that its co-operation on schemes such as the Channel tunnel rail link could be jeopardised by any "direct interventionist controls". He has said the company would lose the support of the financial markets and would find it harder to raise the kind of money needed to sort the railways out.

A government source said Railtrack's reputation in the City was based on its good relationship with government, which would be jeopardised if it tried to blackmail ministers.

Mr Prescott called today's meeting last month after official figures showed a marked fall in performance. Railtrack and the train companies have publicly blamed each other although it is understood they have called a truce for the meeting.

The train companies, which will be represented by two executives of each parent company, said they would take a "constructive approach". They believe they have delivered on promises of attracting more passengers, putting on more trains and cutting fares but

have failed on performance. Mr Prescott may also reveal the main planks of the draft Bill to enact the SRA. The advance look at the legislation is likely to come in the form of a consultation paper. A government source dismissed claims that the industry would be shown a draft of the Bill.

Mr Prescott has advertised for a chairman for the SRA, who will also head the BR board, a chief executive, who will run the franchising side, and a new rail regulator.

The travelling public is also likely to be given a greater say in whether trains are performing to standard. The customer satisfaction surveys, which the companies are required to commission twice a year, will be used alongside reliability and punctuality figures to judge whether companies are meeting standards. These are taken from surveys of about 2,500 travellers and include issues such as fares, ease of buying a ticket, cleanliness of trains and personal security.

The Government believes using the satisfaction surveys as part of the tests for whether train companies are performing well will encourage to think about the passengers.

The next step will be a public summit over the future of the railway industry, which is likely to take place in February. A government source said this would take place "in full public glare" on similar lines to the summit over the water industry.

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Education: Thousands of old and dangerous buildings throughout the country can now be renovated, says Blunkett

# Crumbling schools get grant of £5.4bn

SCHOOLS WILL receive £5.4bn over three years to repair their crumbling buildings, David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, announced yesterday.

BY JUDITH JUDD  
Education Editor

the health and safety of pupils and staff.

Mr Blunkett said on a visit to Parliament Hill School in north London: "It will mean a new beginning for thousands of crumbling schools, as their leaking roofs, crumbling masonry and temporary butts are replaced."

"Already in the past 18 months we have made a substantial start. More than 6,000 schools have had money for badly needed improvements. For too long, many of our schools have had to live with poorly maintained accommodation."

"Pupils and teachers have a right to expect decent conditions in which to learn and teach: this new investment will go a long way to providing those conditions."

For 1999-2000, local authorities will be able to borrow £454m, grant-maintained and church schools will be allocated £242m and the Government will offer £350m to support private investment in improving and maintaining school buildings and £300m for New Deal projects. In the following year, £1.5bn will be allocated and £1.8bn in 2001-02. A further £800m will be provided by local authorities.

The £5bn includes some of the £1bn from the windfall tax for school buildings announced shortly after the government took office. Mr Blunkett said the investment amounted to an extra £750 per pupil.

David Willetts, the Tory education spokesman, attacked Mr Blunkett for "recycling" announcements. "Last week, they

reannounced their Sure Start policy for young children. This week they are recycling the announcement of a capital investment programme for school repairs. There is nothing here which has not been announced several times already."

But Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "Teachers and pupils round the country will welcome this investment in building stock. The environment in which pupils and teachers work can help or hinder educational development."

"My one concern must remain the involvement of private companies in the funding of this initiative. Caution is needed about the Private Finance Initiative, which relies on the vagaries of private companies' profit-making."



David Blunkett during his visit yesterday to Parliament Hill School where renovation is under way Mark Chilvers

## Falling to pieces after 100 years

LAST MONTH a 10-year-old boy at Drayton Green primary school in Ealing, west London, was taken to hospital in an air ambulance after a piece of metal drainpipe weighing 70lb fell on him as he played football in the playground.

His fellow pupils were said to be traumatised as they gathered around his motionless figure on the ground.

Four weeks later he has returned to the school. Peter Brandreth, one of the school's parent governors, said yesterday: "It is a miracle he is alive. The whole experience has been horrendous, both for children and parents. It is the result of 50 years of neglect of school buildings."

When local education authority officers examined the Victorian building, they found that all the window frames were rotten and that another piece of metal drainpipe was loose. The library had to be closed because the ceiling was coming down.

While the Health and Safety Executive investigates, the authority has made the school safe. Perspex covers the unsafe

windows and dangerous drainpipes have been removed. Parents are still anxious.

Bethan Marshall, who has two children there, said: "The school dealt brilliantly with the incident but you could see the children looking up at the fabric of the building when they returned. It's not something a school should have to deal with."

"I question whether a bidding system is sufficient to deal with this. The local authority has put in a bid for New Deal money but can give no guarantee that they will get it."

Drayton Green is far from being the only school in trouble. Alan Parker, Ealing's director of education, says nearly all of the council's 90 schools need attention and that some are in an even worse state than Drayton Green. Work has already begun in a number of schools.

Mr Parker said: "We could comfortably spend £60m without being profligate. We did a lot of work on immediate safety at Drayton Green. It no longer represents a hazard, but we would like to do a big refurbishment."

JUDITH JUDD

## Infant tests 'fail to reveal gifted pupils'

CHILDREN SHOULD be given tougher tests when they start school to identify high-flyers, MPs were told yesterday.

So-called baseline assessment tests for pupils aged four and five were too crude to identify the potential of the brightest pupils, the Commons education select committee heard. Experts on gifted children told MPs that up to two-thirds of schools were failing to stretch the 280,000 children thought to have special talents.

The baseline assessment tests are designed to give teachers an idea of pupils' abilities when they start school. But critics of the tests say they put too much pressure on young children.

The tests, which became compulsory for children starting primary school this September, assess pupils' ability to recognise and write the numbers 1 to 10, write their own names, recognise letters by shape and sound, and concentrate without supervision for 10 minutes.

Ian McNiff, chairman of the pressure group Children of High Intelligence and head-teacher of a Hampshire primary school, said the tests measured children's abilities, not their potential. He said: "My experience is that the tests do not pick up high potential. Baseline assessment does not show if a child can read a book completely."

He said independent tests at his school had shown that one child in six was in the top 2 per cent of the national ability

range. He said the school was blessed with an unusually gifted year group. "I don't think we know how able children are. It is quite staggering. I have had children come into school with a reading age of 14. I once had a girl who had read *Little Women* at the age of four."

The group is devising a series of intelligence tests based on computer puzzles and games, designed to spot children with special abilities.

Peter Carey, director of the National Association for Gifted Children, called for government guidelines on the best way to help gifted children.

He warned against pushing gifted children into academic "hot house" schools, and said that "accelerating" children by moving them up one or two years at school could be counter-productive.

Mr Carey said many ordinary comprehensive schools offered an excellent education to very bright children.

He said: "We do have difficulties with some of the less well-run independent prep schools. They seem to be particularly prone to highly directed and didactic teaching, which is very stifling of creativity in the very high ability children. A lot of parents feel that small village schools are the answer to their high-ability children, but there is some disappointment when they go in."

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Ethnic Albanian children from Kosovo at a camp in an abandoned Coca-Cola plant in Sarajevo. The centre is housing 1,000 refugees as the cold spell hits the Bosnian capital  
Danilo Krstanovic/Reuters

# Common EU army is Fischer's goal

GERMANY'S NEW Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, reignited the debate over the EU's future yesterday, describing political union, including the creation of a European defence force, as his personal goal.

Asked in a newspaper interview about the possibility of a common European army, Mr Fischer replied that, when "full union" took place, foreign and security policy would become a community matter.

"Just as we worked together on the first real transfer of sovereignty in the field of currencies, we ought to work on a common constitution to turn the European Union into an entity under international law," he told the *Frankfurter Rundschau*. "That is my goal. It is the decisive task of our time."

Mr Fischer, a Green who joined the government last month, said that the nucleus of sovereignty should be money, a constitution, basic law and internal and external security.

But he added that Europe "will never become a homogeneous nation state, because we differ in our peculiarities, languages, history, prejudices, passions and animosities".

His comments follow a call for moves towards corporate tax harmonisation from Germany's new Finance Minister, Oskar Lafontaine, which provoked a clash with the British Chancellor, Gordon Brown.

Mr Fischer's comments will alarm Downing Street, already anxious about a pledge from the new Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, to push ahead with European integration during his six-month EU presidency beginning in January.

Amid mounting speculation in Brussels about a new push to harmonise corporate tax rates, Mario Monti, European Commissioner for the internal market, said he is "not proposing a minimum rate of corporation tax at the moment".

But Mr Monti called for greater co-ordination of VAT rates, excise duties and energy duties, and said governments and companies may push for pan-European measures on business taxes after the single currency kicks in next year.

The renewed political turbulence over tax was fuelled on Monday by Mr Lafontaine, who said harmonisation of corporate tax and moves against tax havens would be a priority when Bonn takes over the EU presidency.

France's Finance Minister, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, and the Italian Prime Minister, Massimo D'Alema, have endorsed the idea.

Mr Monti's intervention was designed to lower the temperature amid a growing rift between socialist finance ministers and Mr Brown. Mr Brown has threatened to veto any moves to harmonise taxes, which would have to be agreed by all 15 EU countries.

Instead of extending its ambitions, the Commission has decided to use the new political climate to try to push through the measures it has on the stocks. These include a code of conduct, designed to stop countries luring investors through preferential tax regimes, and a more controversial minimum tax on savings. This proposal, aimed at preventing EU nationals taking advantage of low rates in other European countries, is opposed by Britain.

However, Mr Monti argued that his package had growing support and said it was important "not to destabilise this consensus" by embarking on new measures. Asked whether EMU would lead to more calls for harmonisation, he replied: "Once the euro is in place the dynamics may well be greater."

Niall Ferguson, Review, page 4

## French bishop denies baptism to NF activist

A FRENCH bishop has refused to baptise an activist of the far-right National Front because he says the party's racial policies are contrary to the values of Christianity.

The decision - a first in France - is likely to cause a storm between the liberal and traditional wings of the French Catholic church.

The NF activist, Joel David, a member of the party's security service, says he intends to write to the Pope to appeal against the bishop's decision.

"The bishop has punished me without even knowing me," said Mr David, 47, a baker and producer of *foie gras* in Moulins in the west of France, who felt the call of the Church while on a visit to Lourdes.

Monseigneur Albert Rouet, the bishop of Poitiers, says he is prepared to meet Mr David face to face and that the church is always ready to receive a sinner who repents.

"I explained to this baptismal candidate that the ideology of the National Front is contrary to the message of Christ and the Church," he said.

"But I did not close the door completely. I urged him to consider his position and choose between the Christian faith and his political ideas."

One implication of Msgr Rouet's decision is that all National Front supporters - who include many people who regard themselves as exceptionally good Catholics - are outside the teaching of the Church and should not receive communion.

The French Church, while declining to criticise the bishop's decision, refused to go down this route. "Every French Catholic is free to belong to the party if he chooses," said Monseigneur Louis-Marie Billé, president of the French

BY JOHN LICHFIELD  
in Paris

conference of bishops. However, he added: "Our role as bishops is to guide consciences. It is not inconceivable that a bishop should find the ethical and spiritual implications of a political commitment incompatible with access to the sacrament."

Abbé Christian Bouchacourt, a Lefebvriste priest in Paris, said: "The bishops have never shown such rigour towards Communists, Freemasons or abortion activists. Let them tell us how the National Front is in breach of the Ten Commandments."

"There is nothing in the catechism which forbids national preference. The NF, although not perfect, defends the values of natural law." (National preference is one of the NF code phrases for discrimination against immigrants).

Mr Bouchacourt accused the bishop of breaking down the boundaries between church and state. Asked whether he would baptise an avowed Communist, the Abbe replied: "Marxism is a denial of God... A Communist activist would have to renounce his political convictions before he could receive baptism."

The Bishop of Poitiers first made his views known to Mr David 18 months ago but the decision has only just been made public. It was immediately denounced by ultra-traditional Catholic followers of the late archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who have been in schism with Rome since 1976. The Lefebvristes and other extreme traditionalist Catholics form one of the principal tributaries of support for the National Front, which claims to stand for the values of flag, family and church.

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# PC WORLD

THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE

مكتبة القرآن



## Benetton goes black to lead Kurd protest

THE UNITED colours of Benetton have all turned black in Turkey. Only black clothing is on display in the shopfronts of Benetton's 171 outlets in the country. Some have festooned their windows with black ribbon. The only splash of colour permitted is the red Turkish flag.

But this is not one of the outlandish stunts that have made the Italian clothing giant famous. It is a protest against the Italian government's reluctance to extradite the Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan to Turkey to face trial for terrorist offences. The move does not come from Benetton, but from the owners of the shops in Turkey, which are operated under licence. "It's a very understandable protest and Benetton is making no reaction," said a spokeswoman.

The stunt is just one of a series of gestures against Italy from a furious Turkish public. Italian-made mopeds and washing machines have been burnt on the streets. The Italian

BY JUSTIN HUGGLER  
in Istanbul

Embassy has been besieged by protesters. "We will annex Italy," one shouted last week.

Viewers tuning into Italian cable television channels found an announcement from Turkey's state-run cable operator explaining that it had cut the stations' broadcasts in protest.

Mr Ocalan and his Kurdistan Workers' Party are loathed in Turkey, where they are blamed for the deaths of 30,000 civilians. Last week, the Turkish Prime Minister, Mesut Yilmaz, threatened Italy with Turkey's "eternal hostility" if it did not hand over Mr Ocalan.

That hostility is visible on the streets. "We're having a boycott on their products, we won't buy a thing from them," are frequent comments. Italian people are no longer welcome, and Rome has warned its citizens to avoid travel in Turkey.

Benetton believes that it will not be hit by a boycott, as 95 per

cent of the products that it sells in Turkey are produced in the country. However, a domestic car manufacturer, Tofas, a joint venture with Italy's Fiat, has already had 1,000 orders cancelled. "For a company which produces 100,000 cars a year, 1,000 can be excused in the name of a national cause, but we are concerned that this loss will grow," a company official said.

The European Union Commission has threatened economic sanctions if the boycott is backed by the Turkish government. Turkey's defence ministry said it would rule Italy out of future defence contracts.

Bitterness spread on to the football pitch when Uefa decided earlier this week to postpone a football match between the Turkish champions, Galatasaray, and Juventus of Turin, because Italian players feared for their safety.

When supporters of Mr Ocalan held a march in central Istanbul last week, angry Turkish bystanders attacked them.



Mothers of Turkish soldiers killed fighting the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) demonstrating outside the Italian Consulate in Istanbul EPA

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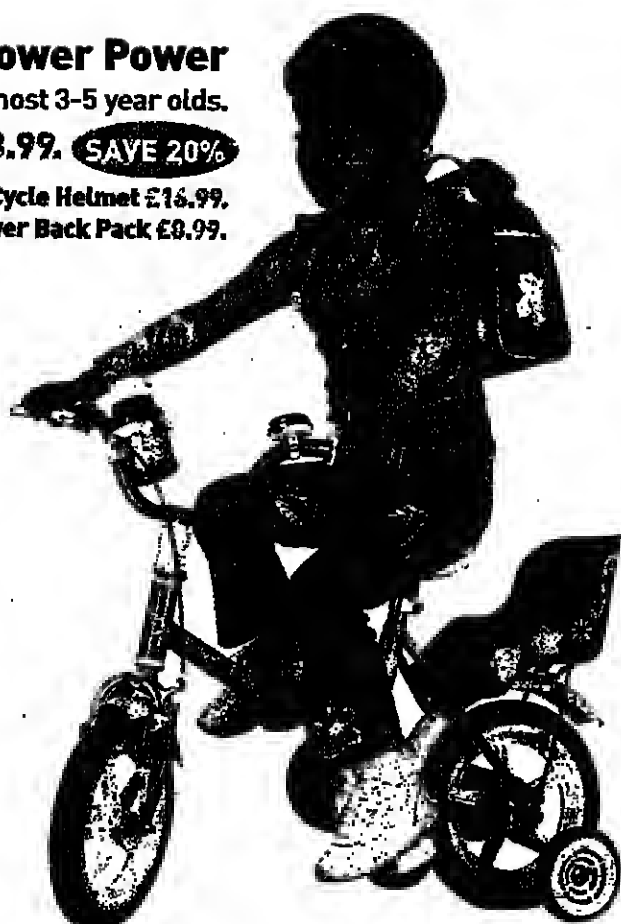
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## Turkish coalition sunk by scandal

TURKEY'S government fell from power yesterday as the country remained embroiled in a bitter dispute with Italy over the fate of a Kurdish rebel leader. Hours before the government lost a parliamentary vote of no-confidence, it had seemed to be making moves to ease tensions with Rome over the extradition of Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers party (PKK).

Turkey's parliament voted 314-214 against Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's coalition. Mr Yilmaz had been expected to lose the no-confidence vote, brought by opposition parties, after he was accused of corruption in the privatisation of a state bank.

Shortly before voting commenced, the government's senior spokesman was reported to have offered a compromise in Turkey's worsening dispute with Italy by saying Ankara would accept Mr Ocalan's trial in a third country.

Tensions have been high since Mr Ocalan was arrested in Rome two weeks ago. The PKK wants autonomy for Kurds in south-eastern Turkey, but Ankara considers it a terrorist organisation and holds Mr Ocalan responsible for the deaths of 30,000 Turkish civilians.

Turkey had expected Mr Ocalan's extradition to be a formality, and was incensed when Italy said it would consider Mr Ocalan's request for political asylum.

A Rome court overturned Turkey's arrest warrant on the ground that Italian law forbids extradition in cases where the accused might face the death penalty.

Mr Yilmaz on Tuesday suggested Turkey would accept Mr Ocalan's extradition to Germany instead, as Bonn also has an arrest warrant for Mr Ocalan. But, so far, Germany has insisted it will not request the PKK chief's extradition.

In a new twist to the diplomatic crisis, it emerged yesterday that arrival in Rome of the PKK leader had been part

BY JUSTIN HUGGLER  
in Istanbul  
FRANCES KENNEDY  
in Rome  
AND KATHERINE BUTLER  
in Brussels

of a plan to try to bring an end to the Kurdish rebellion. A small group of Italian left-wing MPs said they had brought him to Italy in the hope that he would launch a new peace initiative from there.

Ramon Mantovani, a member of the Refoundation party, admitted he had travelled with Mr Ocalan from Moscow to Rome. The disclosure comes as a severe embarrassment to the Italian Prime Minister, Massimo D'Alema, who insisted that Italy was "an innocent victim" in the affair.

Lawyers for the Kurdish leader are now said to be optimistic he will be granted political asylum and allowed to remain in Italy indefinitely.

In Brussels, Nato officials dismissed suggestions that they put pressure on Turkey to ease its war of words with Italy. But sources admitted there was mounting concern about the sudden deterioration of relations between the two Nato allies - and the consequences of the row for Turkey's EU membership bid.

On Tuesday, the European Commission waded in on Italy's side, threatening Turkey with retaliatory trade sanctions. Nato is worried that the new setback in the EU's shaky relations with Ankara will lead to further political isolation of a key military power that the West can ill afford to alienate.

EU heads of government, many of whom are already deeply hostile to Turkey's accession, will be presented with a damning progress report from the Commission when they meet in Vienna in two weeks. The report cites "persistent human rights violations" linked to the Kurdish question, and "major shortcomings" in the treatment of Turkey's minorities.

## Government makes return to Berlin

BELOW THE stained-glass murals of muscular workers and pretty women of immaculate peasant stock, history was made, yesterday, when the government of united Germany held its first meeting in Berlin since 1945.

In a symbolic outing to the old capital, Gerhard Schröder's cabinet marched through a gateway rescued from the Prussian royal palace, and into the building which was used by the former East German leader Erich Honecker. There, they

BY IMRE KARACS  
in Bonn

took up seats around a large table and discussed ways of tackling youth unemployment.

A new chancellery being built by the river Spree will be delayed by at least three months, so the first meeting cannot be held there until next October. Meanwhile, Mr Schröder will be working from a cavernous office adjacent to Honecker's, but will live in a villa in what was west Berlin.





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BY JUSTIN HUGGER  
in Istanbul  
FRANCIS KENNEDY  
in Rome  
AND KATHERINE BUTLER  
in Brussels

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ent makes  
Berlin

BY MARK KUCYNS  
in Bonn

bank up seats around a be-  
table and discussed ways  
talking with members  
A new chamber of com-  
merce by the river Rhine  
delayed by at least six  
months, on the first meet-  
ing cannot be held there until  
October. Meanwhile, a  
Schreder will be a welcome  
a conversation with a  
"knacker", but will be a  
in what was once being

# PoWs set to take war claim to Blair

FORMER PRISONERS of war  
held by the Japanese are  
threatening to sue the Gov-  
ernment for compensation if  
their claims are rejected in a  
Tokyo court today.

Representatives of 25,000  
former Allied PoWs and civilian  
internees will gather in the  
Tokyo District Court this morn-  
ing to hear the judgment on  
their demand for compensation  
of \$22,000 (£13,500) each for  
suffering endured at the hands  
of their Japanese captors dur-  
ing the Second World War.

Lawyers for the group said  
last night they were pessimistic  
about the outcome of the case,  
but that they planned to take  
their legal struggle to the  
British courts if it failed today.

"There is an increasing mood  
of anger against the British  
Government, and a feeling that  
we are banging our heads  
against a brick wall... in Japan,"  
the group's British lawyer, Mar-  
tyn Day, said in Tokyo last night.  
"We're coming to the view that  
much of the blame for the fail-  
ure to gain justice for the PoWs  
and internees lies at the door of  
the... Government."

The Japanese government  
has never disputed the PoWs'  
claims of beatings, sexual as-  
saults, torture, deprivation and  
abuse during their captivity.  
But both the Japanese and  
British governments insist that  
issues of compensation were  
settled in the San Francisco  
Treaty of 1952, which exempted  
Japan from further repara-  
tions. At the time, former  
British PoWs received £78.50 for  
their sufferings in captivity.

The PoWs have always  
claimed that the official British  
stance reflects political expedi-  
ency and a desire to avoid  
offending Japan, which is a  
valuable trading partner of the  
UK and an investor.

But now they believe they

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY  
in Tokyo

have found a loophole in the  
treaty, which places responsi-  
bility for claiming compensation  
with the British Government.

A clause in the San Francisco  
Treaty stated that Britain is  
entitled to claim more compen-  
sation if Japan should subse-  
quently reach a more generous  
settlement with another country  
- as it did with several countries,  
including Burma and Switzer-  
land, during the 1950s.

Recently, Keith Martin, a  
former civilian internee and a  
plaintiff in the case, discov-  
ered in the Public Record Office  
confidential some Foreign Of-  
fice correspondence dating  
from 1955, which noted this  
possibility but ruled out  
further claims "on general  
grounds of foreign relations,  
despite the possibility of do-  
mestic political embarrass-  
ment in connection with Allied  
prisoners of war".

The case was taken up per-  
sonally by the Prime Minister,  
Tony Blair, during his visit to  
Tokyo last January when he ap-  
pealed to British people to put  
the past behind them.

Despite a co-ordinated pub-  
lic relations campaign by the two  
governments and the visit to  
Britain of the Japanese Em-  
peror last May, the issue refus-  
es to go away.

"Tony Blair... assured us  
that he has the political will to  
pursue this case if it is within  
the Government's legal power,"  
Mr Day said. "We're very clear  
that there is a case."

The verdict was due just  
hours before a summit meeting  
between the Japanese Prime  
Minister, Keizo Obuchi, and  
the Chinese President, Jiang  
Zemin, who is also pressing  
Tokyo over wartime atrocities  
perpetrated in Asia.



A woman and her son yesterday surveying the remains of their home ruined by last week's earthquakes in Ninglang Autonomous County, in China's south-western Yunnan province. The twin quakes, measuring 5.0 and 6.2 on the Richter scale, killed three people and injured 1,500

Reuters

# Christians call day of action in India

AN EPIDEMIC of violence  
against Christians in India has  
prompted an ecumenical group  
to declare a "day of action" on  
4 December, when Christian  
schools and colleges across  
the country will close in protest.

Last Sunday, about 40 armed  
gangs forced their way into St  
Thomas Evangelical Church in  
Murai, near Mangalore, in the  
southern state of Karnataka.  
They broke up a communion  
service, attacking the congrega-  
tion, which consisted mostly  
of women and children, and  
beat the Indian pastor.

This was the first attack in  
Karnataka, a state with a sub-  
stantial Christian minority. It  
follows attacks on Christian

BY PETER POPHAM  
in Delhi

communities in other parts of the  
country, which have multiplied  
since the Hindu nationalist  
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)  
came to power eight months ago.

Churches have been de-  
stroyed, congregations broken  
up, schools vandalised, Bibles  
burnt and prayer halls looted. In  
September, in the northern state  
of Madhya Pradesh, five nuns  
were abducted from their con-  
vent and gang-raped. There  
have been few arrests for any of  
these crimes.

The United Christian Forum  
for Human Rights, a newly es-  
tablished ecumenical organi-

sation, believes that of the 120  
attacks on Christians that have  
been recorded since 1984, more  
than 70 have taken place this  
year alone.

The reason for the increase in  
attacks is plain: the BJP's  
grassroots supporters include  
extremist Hindu zealots who  
have seized the opportunity of-  
fered by BJP rule to pursue  
their own brutal agenda with-  
out fear of legal consequences.

Organisations such as  
Bajrang Dal, set up after the de-  
molition of the Babri Masjid  
mosque at Ayodhya in 1992,  
the Vishwa Hindu Parishad  
and the RSS have long thrived  
on Hindu paranoia about the  
"divisive" and "oppressive" ac-

tivities of India's minorities. In  
the past the target was gener-  
ally the far larger Muslim com-  
munity, but as the BJP cannot  
risk alienating the Muslim vote  
for electoral reasons, the focus  
has switched to the 23 million  
Christians.

The violence has been  
accompanied by anti-Christian  
rhetoric, with the Hindu groups  
voicing their view that foreign  
missionaries should be ex-  
pelled. A leading figure in the  
RSS, considered to be the most  
disciplined of the extremist  
groups, said the recent gang-  
rape of nuns was due to "the  
anger of patriotic Hindu youth  
against anti-national forces".  
Against this backdrop, Christians

across India have come to-  
gether to demonstrate in what  
may be the most effective way  
they can - by shutting down  
their schools and colleges.

India's Christians are a di-  
verse community. Sixty per-  
cent are so-called "Dalits", the  
"Oppressed", or what used to be  
called "Untouchables". Chris-  
tians in the south-western state  
of Kerala are one of the oldest  
congregations in the world.

Another 15 to 20 per cent of  
Christians are tribal people,  
many in the north-east where in  
some states they are the ma-  
jority. It is in the Christian  
communities that we can expect gen-  
erosity - or even the rule of law."

on the country. It is the major-  
ity Hindu community that gets  
most benefit. Christian stu-  
dents at such institutions  
amount to 10 per cent of the in-  
take at the most, and sometimes  
as little as 3 per cent.

The shutdown will be the  
first such action by the Chris-  
tian community as a whole. Until  
recently Christians in India  
have felt little threatened.

"Christians have had a lot of  
trust in their rulers," said John  
Dayal, convener of the new  
forum, "and they forgot that the  
state and the polity in India are  
becoming more vicious, and  
that this is not a state from  
which we can expect generosi-  
ty - or even the rule of law."

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Amar Alami (left) at an Arab fund-raising event in London in 1991. Police accept she did not plant the London bombs

# Riddle of man behind Israeli embassy bomb

CONVINCED THAT they were "set up" by an agent working for Israel, two Palestinians imprisoned for conspiring to bomb the Israeli embassy in London in 1994 have produced an astonishing portrait of the man they claim was really responsible for the explosion - an Arab who called himself Rada Moghrabi but who is unknown to every major guerrilla group in the Middle East.

Sketches of the man - drawn at the request of *The Independent* by a professional artist in separate sittings with Samar Alami and Jawad Botmi in their prisons in the north of England - show an almost identical image: that of a dark-skinned man in his 40s with a lined face, short, black fringe, prominent

BY ROBERT FISK  
Middle East Correspondent

eyebrows and nose, and staring eyes.

At their trial and in the two years since, Alami and Botmi have protested their innocence of the bombing, insisting that the explosion in July 1994 - in which, remarkably, no one was killed - could only harm the Palestinian cause.

In his summing up before their conviction in 1996, Mr Justice Garland remarked that, so far as the two accused were concerned, Moghrabi "could have been a Mossad agent or a police informer."

The police agree that Alami and Botmi did not actually carry out the bombings but - save for a look through immigration files - have made no further attempt to find Moghrabi. Alami and Botmi were sentenced to 20 years. They were also convicted of conspiring to bomb a building containing the Zionist Federation office in Finchley, north London, a few hours after the embassy bomb - though both proved they were far from the scene of the explosions.

Even before the trial began, however, the Israeli ambassador "congratulated" the police on their arrest of the "terrorists". An Israeli embassy security video-camera that might have identified the faces of the real bombers was apparently not working on the day of the explosion.

Alami first disclosed Moghrabi's name towards the end of the court hearing - 200 hours of evidence that contained enough errors and interruptions to raise serious questions about the convictions

- and insisted, with Botmi, that she knew nothing about the embassy attack. Today they are convinced, in Alami's words, that "Moghrabi or someone with him set us up from the beginning, either deliberately or to protect themselves from being caught".

Moghrabi - who must have been well known to dozens of Palestinians in London where he attended political discussions and poetry readings at meetings of the Arab Club - apparently worked in the Gulf in the late 1980s and settled in Kuwait until fleeing when the Iraqi army invaded in 1991.

Alami said that she heard rumours that he may have married an English woman in Birmingham; she remembers being given his telephone contact with a prefix 021 (then the dialling code for Birmingham) but says she did not keep the number.

At their 1996 trial, neither Alami nor Botmi - respectively chemical and electronic engineers - attempted to hide their own dabbling in experiments which, however preposterous, were intended to assist Palestinian groups in Lebanon and the occupied territories.

They admitted trying to construct miniature aircraft that would carry bombs across the Lebanese frontier to Israel - in the course of an experiment in the Peak District they almost blew up a tree.

Alami was also found in possession of explosives as well as two guns which she said she was keeping for a Palestinian who feared assassination in London.

Bomber who never was.  
Review, front

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"I never knew how much I didn't know."

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## Iraq sees hope in UN decision

IRAQ HAS welcomed "as positive and encouraging" the decision by the United Nations Security Council not to blame it in the dispute over the handing over of documents to weapons inspectors.

An official said: "This shows the radical position which Britain wanted to adopt with the backing of the United States did not find listening ears at the Security Council." Earlier the Russians blocked a statement drafted by Britain that would have made clear Iraq had not complied with its promise to co-operate with the UN Special Committee (Unscoc) on eliminating weapons. The Iraqi pledge prevented air strikes on 14 November, when US bombers were already in the air.

The official added: "America and Britain have always been united in taking radical stands against Iraq. This is no surprise to us, because they hold enmity against Iraq, but these two countries are not the only ones at the Council. There are other states which have weight and influence, like Russia, China and France."

At the UN in New York the Security Council president,

BY PATRICK COCKBURN

Peter Burleigh, admitted it was split. "We have not reached any definitive conclusions this evening. So these discussions will continue but this is not a very encouraging start."

Iraq has sent three letters to the Security Council saying 10 out of 12 documents demanded by Richard Butler, the head of Unscoc, are irrelevant, unavailable or concern Iraqi national security.

Sergei Lavrov, Russia's UN representative, said he wanted discussion about whether the documents really existed before agreeing to a statement such as that drafted by Britain. If the council believes Iraq is co-operating, it has promised a full review of its compliance with UN resolutions. This might lead to an easing of sanctions first imposed in 1990.

Iraq isolated itself on 31 October by ending co-operation with Unscoc and thereby alienating Russia, France and China on the Security Council. It is now trying to reverse its diplomatic losses by portraying the US and Britain as seeking confrontation.

## US admiral faces adultery charges

A SENIOR United States naval officer faces multiple counts of adultery and lying in the latest case of sexual misconduct to be acknowledged by the military.

According to the *Washington Times*, which revealed details of the charges yesterday, David Seudi, a rear-admiral who was in charge of the Navy's office of outsourcing and privatisation, has been suspended from his duties in Washington and transferred to the naval base at Norfolk, Virginia.

The case has come to light at a sensitive time, only days before the judiciary committee of the House of Representatives holds a special session to compare the accusations against President Bill Clinton in the Monica Lewinsky affair with the definition and punishment of perjury in other areas of American life.

Among those expected to give evidence are judges, con-

BY MARY DEJEVSKY  
in Washington

victed perjurers and those with experience of handling sexual misconduct cases in the military. Mr Clinton is accused of lying about the affair under oath and obstructing justice, and the committee is considering whether to recommend impeachment.

According to the *Washington Times*, David Seudi is only the second admiral to have been charged with criminal offences since the 1950s. A preliminary hearing is to be held next month to decide whether the case should proceed to court martial.

Seudi, 54 and married, is charged with two counts of adultery, giving false statements, obstruction of justice and violation of military ethics. He is accused of liaisons with a defence contractor and a civilian Navy employee.

مكتبة الامم



# Slum project brings hope to India's Untouchables

DELHI'S WEALTH sucks the poor out of the countryside in huge numbers. They arrive from all corners of the country, desperate to improve their lot. And this city does a deal with them: wash our dishes, fling our laundry, walk our dogs, build our office blocks, sweep our streets. To that extent, you exist. But there is nowhere for you to live.

Public housing in Delhi is utterly inadequate. And for the poor villagers who roll into town in their thousands, there is not the ghost of a chance of finding a "pukka" house.

So when public land or marginal land along rivers or open drains or railway tracks is not watched over with great vigilance, villagers build new villages on it - gruesome parodies of where they came from, homes made of plastic, sacking and flimsy wood, communities lacking drains or running water or electricity, crammed together as tightly as possible.

These "unauthorised colonies", which may contain 4 million of Delhi's roughly 11

## FRONTLINE DELHI

million people, can be demolished at any time. Their survival depends on the patronage of a slum landlord-cum-politician who does what is useful in terms of bulksheesh and intimidation to keep away the wrecking ball. In return, when elections come around (next week here), he is guaranteed the colony's block vote.

It is a singular way to develop your capital city. It produces virulent epidemics and many other evils. But for Delhi's middle class there is one great compensation: a permanent bank of cheap domestics.

Delhi's slum problem is growing worse all the time, and in the past 10 years the number of unauthorised colonies has doubled from 750 to 1,500. But the work of a Delhi-based organisation called Asha ("Hope") proves that the slums are not beyond redemption. Most of Kiran Martin's fellow medical students wanted

either to find a job abroad or to start their own private hospital. Dr Martin was different. "I've always been completely uninterested in money," she says, "and I had a very strong desire to work among the poorest of the poor." So 10 years ago, already an experienced paediatrician, she walked into a terrible Delhi slum called Dr Ambedkar Basti and, after difficult discussions with the slum's intensely suspicious boss, set up her first clinic.

That year, cholera raged through Delhi's slums and, as healthcare provision was negligible (like every other public service), Dr Martin found herself in huge demand. But from the outset, healthcare was only the first step, her foot in the door.

Dr Ambedkar Basti is home to 5,500 Dalits or Untouchables, as poor as they are uneducated. "The conditions were unimaginable," says Dr Martin. "Animals were cohabiting with the people, children and pigs were wallowing together in the mud, children were dying everywhere, there were piles of garbage." The task



Sobha, a slum dweller who has trained as a health worker, tending to a baby. John McCormick.

Dr Martin gave herself was to build a partnership with the people of Dr Ambedkar Basti so that they could learn how to improve their own situation.

"I was not interested merely in service delivery, but in

working with people as partners," she says. "That is much more difficult, but our philosophy is that the poor have so much potential."

Dr Martin gradually evolved her own distinctive approach to

the slums. It consists of recruiting and training community health volunteers within the slum; setting up women's groups through which the women can receive training in the rudiments of health, sani-

tation, community organisation and so on, and at the same time working tirelessly with the political bosses and the city's slum commissioners, to cajole, bully and charm them into doing their duty.

"In Dr Ambedkar Basti, the women persuaded me to meet the slum commissioner on their behalf," she remembers. "He came and saw what I was doing there and got the shock of his life. Something happened to him that day. It was the start of a great relationship with this man - he later said this encounter changed his life. Within two months the colony had a proper drain, a tarred road, hand pumps for water and pavements tiled with bricks."

Spurred on by this success, Dr Martin and her colleagues, most of them passionate though not proselytising Christians, have taken their unique programme to more than 20 other slum colonies around Delhi, home to more than 120,000 people. It's a drop in the ocean. But Asha's most successful projects, such as the

colony of Shanti Vihar, show what can happen when the potential of the people is released.

At Shanti Vihar none of the old stigmas of the slums is in evidence. With money funnelled into the colony, largely from the British charity Tearfund, and with intense political pressure applied by Asha, the place has been transformed. Houses are brick-built, lanes are surfaced with concrete with proper drains underneath; 100 per cent of the children go to school; and the place is stunningly clean.

"The transformation is largely the result of Dr Martin's belief in human potential. 'We are all human beings, that should be the basis of how we look at each other,' she says. 'And unless people are trained and organised, no sustained development is possible.'"

More information about Asha can be obtained from Friends of Asha UK, c/o Peter Martin, 137 Kingfishers Road, Ilford, Essex IG3 9QN. Tel 0181 597 0225.

PETER POPHAM

## Burma fighters resort to mines

BURMA'S MINORITY Karen community, which has experienced a history of oppression at the hands of the military regime in Rangoon, is now facing two lethal hazards.

For the first time in the decades-long war for a Karen state, both sides have started laying land-mines. In addition, Burmese government forces are reported to have started destroying rice crops to starve out the regime's most powerful military opponent, the Karen National Union (KNU).

While the armed wings of most other Burmese ethnic groups have signed ceasefire agreements with the military regime, the Karen has maintained its resistance, operating in the south of the country around the border with Thailand.

The introduction of land-mines risks pushing Burma in the direction of Cambodia, where the legacy of the civil war is seen almost every day as villagers are killed by land-mines. At the height of the Cambodian fighting, land-mines killed and maimed thousands of civilians.

International observers on the Thai-Burmese border say both the Burmese and Karen forces are using land-mines in the fight to gain territory in southern Burma. The military know where the mines are laid, but civilians do not.

The laying of the mines co-

BY STEPHEN VINES  
in Hong Kong

incides with the start of the dry season, which is when most military offensives are launched.

Burmese dissidents in Bangkok, capital of neighbouring Thailand, report that government soldiers burnt paddy fields near Tavoy in southern Burma at the beginning of this month to deny the KNU access to rice crops.

Zaw Min, a spokesman for the All Burma Students' Democratic Front in Bangkok, said the destruction occurred just before the villagers were expected to harvest their crops.

"This will have an enormous effect on the villagers because they have no means of supporting themselves other than their crops," he said.

Ethnic minority villagers in the Burmese border areas have suffered a long history of being displaced and attacked. The Karen is Burma's biggest ethnic minority. Others, including Shan and Mon civilians, have been attacked by the Burmese army for supporting separatist armies before they signed the ceasefire agreements in Rangoon.

Stories of rape and slavery inflicted on the ethnic minorities keep surfacing, although the Burmese government claims to have pacified most of the border regions.

## Orange Everyday 20 could mean it's time to say goodbye to your BT phone

What you get for a total of 50p per day

|  | Orange Everyday 20   | BT                                       |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Number of minutes of national off-peak calls | 20 minutes every day | 5 minutes weekdays or 7 minutes weekends |
| Line rental                                  | ✓                    | ✓  |
| Caller display                               | ✓                    | x  |
| Call waiting                                 | ✓                    | x  |
| Call divert                                  | ✓                    | x  |
| Conference calling                           | ✓                    | x  |
| Busy facility                                | ✓                    | x  |

Orange Everyday 20 gives you 20 minutes of off-peak calls on the best performing digital mobile network in the UK, to anywhere in the country for 50p a day. It's ideal for people who want a phone to use at evenings and weekends. Call 0800 30 10 80 for details or visit [www.orange.co.uk](http://www.orange.co.uk)

Prices based on standard network recommended rates, excluding discounts or optional schemes and promotional offers. Orange Everyday 20 includes 20 minutes of off-peak calls per day. Peak rate calls cost 40p/minute. Any additional off-peak calls cost 10p/minute. Orange off-peak period is 7pm-7am. BT off-peak period is 6pm-8am. Connection to Orange is subject to status and a one-off connection charge of £35. Connection to a new BT line is subject to a one-off connection charge of £116.33.

## Oxfam Hurricane Appeal

"Imagine your worst nightmare. Imagine waking up to something a hundred times worse."

Daniel Alegria, Oxfam, Nicaragua, November 1998

That's how Hurricane Mitch felt to the people of Central America.

Over 18,000 people are dead or missing.

Millions of survivors are in desperate need.

Oxfam is there. Water equipment, sent within days of the disaster, is already saving thousands of lives - providing clean, safe water and preventing further deaths from cholera and diarrhoea.

Food, medicines, and temporary shelters have been sent to people who have lost everything. We need your help to do more. A water tap can cost as little as £25; a feeding kit for 500 people as much as £250.

Please send your gift to the Oxfam Hurricane Appeal, using the coupon below, or phone now on:

**01865 313131**

Yes, I want to help. Here is my gift of:

£25 ☐ £50 ☐ £100 ☐ £250 ☐ £

Mr, Mrs, Mes, Ms

Address

Postcode

Please send to: Oxfam, Room 8815, FREEPOST, Oxford OX2 7BR. Long-term recovery in Honduras and Nicaragua will take decades and cost billions. Debt cancellation and long-term aid is the only sensible solution. If you want to know more about Oxfam's campaign for debt relief in Central America, please tick here. ☐

**OXFAM**

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# BUSINESS

## BRIEFING

**M&S turns to City spin doctor**  
MARKS & SPENCER has brought in one of the City's top spin doctors to handle the announcement of the retailer's management succession. Alan Parker head of Brunswick Public Relations was hired at the last minute to advise M&S on how to handle the issue. He was at the M&S's headquarters in London yesterday as the board held a crisis meeting to decide who should succeed Sir Richard Greenbury, who is due to split his chairman and chief executive roles ahead of his planned retirement in 2001. Marks & Spencer said it will make a statement today regarding the management succession problem.

## Opec talks fall behind schedule

**BRENT CRUDE**  
OPEC OIL ministers meeting in Vienna last night postponed a meeting at the last minute, apparently because they had not agreed how to boost prices. The meeting had been due to begin at 6pm but bilateral talks were still ongoing. OPEC's 11 members are falling short even of pledged cuts of 2.6 million barrels a day, which are expected to be extended to the end of 1999, with estimates of the actual reduction as low as 2.16 million. Infighting among Saudi Arabia, Venezuela and Iran is likely to prevent the deeper output cuts which analysts said are necessary to ease an oil glut and a 38 per cent slump in oil prices in the past year. Oil prices were little changed yesterday, after falling 12 per cent in the past two weeks, with January Brent crude oil up 2 cents at \$11.21 a barrel in London.

## BA pays £240m for stake in Iberia

BRITISH AIRWAYS and American Airlines are to pay \$8bn (£240m) for a 9 per cent stake in Iberia, the Spanish flag carrier, Spain's Industry Minister Josep Pique said yesterday. As part of the agreement to buy the stake from Spain's state holding company, Sepi, both sides have agreed to value Iberia at Ptas80bn. New shares will be created for the deal with Sepi increasing Iberia's share capital by Ptas78bn. The extra Ptas20bn amounts to the remains of a Ptas107bn bailout three years ago. The sale is the first part of the Iberia's privatisation. Sepi plans to sell 30 per cent to Spanish industrial companies in the first quarter of next year. That will be followed by a public share sale of 50 per cent in May or June if market conditions permit.

## STOCK MARKETS

| Index          | Close    | Change  | Change (%) | 52 wk high | 52 wk low | Yield (%) |
|----------------|----------|---------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| FTSE 100       | 5755.30  | -43.00  | -0.74      | 6183.70    | 4599.20   | 3.27      |
| FTSE 250       | 4926.40  | 2.50    | 0.05       | 5070.00    | 4247.00   | 4.71      |
| FTSE 350       | 2728.40  | -16.80  | -0.61      | 2969.10    | 2210.40   | 3.51      |
| FTSE All Share | 2832.91  | -15.60  | -0.55      | 2986.52    | 2153.53   | 3.33      |
| FTSE SmallCap  | 2062.20  | -1.50   | -0.12      | 2793.00    | 1834.00   | 3.51      |
| FTSE Fledgling | 1140.20  | -1.40   | -0.12      | 1517.00    | 1046.00   | 0.00      |
| FTSE AIM       | 817.90   | -2.20   | -0.27      | 1146.90    | 761.30    | 0.00      |
| FTSE EBLCC 100 | 955.97   | 2.44    | 0.26       |            |           |           |
| Dow Jones      | 9268.46  | -30.38  | -0.33      | 9380.20    | 7460.30   | 1.81      |
| Nikkei         | 15073.47 | -91.17  | -0.60      | 17352.00   | 12787.00  | 0.97      |
| Hang Seng      | 10720.99 | -130.72 | -1.21      | 11926.00   | 6544.00   | 2.91      |
| Dax            | 4944.37  | -14.45  | -0.29      | 6217.00    | 3833.00   | 1.80      |

## INTEREST RATES

| Index      | Close | Change | Change (%) | 52 wk high | 52 wk low | Yield (%) |
|------------|-------|--------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| UK 3 MONTH | 5.94  | -0.74  | -12.46     | 6.68       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| UK 6 MONTH | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| UK 1 YEAR  | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| UK 2 YEAR  | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| UK 5 YEAR  | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| UK 10 YEAR | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| US 3 MONTH | 5.94  | -0.74  | -12.46     | 6.68       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| US 6 MONTH | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| US 1 YEAR  | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| US 2 YEAR  | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| US 5 YEAR  | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |
| US 10 YEAR | 6.43  | -1.45  | -22.55     | 7.88       | 5.19      | 1.84      |

## CURRENCIES

| Index | Close  | Change  | Change (%) | 52 wk high | 52 wk low | Yield (%) |
|-------|--------|---------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| \$/£  | 1.6629 | +0.0048 | 0.29       | 1.6782     | 1.5350    | 0.5866    |
| DM/£  | 2.8309 | +0.0062 | 0.22       | 2.8359     | 2.7040    | 0.3091    |
| ¥/£   | 202.47 | +2.00   | 1.00       | 213.59     | 190.91    | 1.2735    |
| €/\$  | 1.0170 | +0.010  | 1.00       | 1.0390     | 0.9100    | 0.0670    |

## OTHER INDICATORS

| Index          | Close  | Change | Change (%) | 52 wk high | 52 wk low | Yield (%) |
|----------------|--------|--------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Brent Oil (\$) | 10.64  | 0.20   | 1.90       | 11.04      | 9.04      | Dec       |
| Gold (\$)      | 295.95 | -0.65  | -0.22      | 299.15     | 285.00    | Nov       |
| Silver (\$)    | 0.00   | 0.00   | 0.00       | 5.33       | 4.75      | 7.25      |

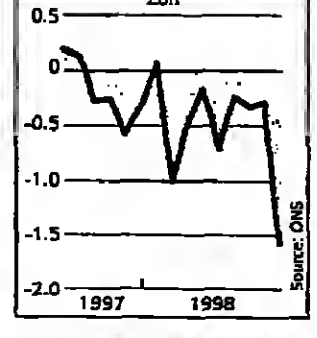
## TOURIST RATES

| Country               | Rate   |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Australia (\$)        | 2.4916 |
| Austria (schillings)  | 19.27  |
| Belgium (francs)      | 56.63  |
| Canada (\$)           | 2.5053 |
| Cyprus (pounds)       | 0.8068 |
| Denmark (krone)       | 10.48  |
| Finland (markka)      | 8.3530 |
| France (francs)       | 9.2028 |
| Germany (marks)       | 2.7536 |
| Greece (drachma)      | 461.51 |
| Hong Kong (\$)        | 12.45  |
| Ireland (pounds)      | 1.0994 |
| India (rupees)        | 63.23  |
| Israel (shekels)      | 6.3997 |
| Italy (lira)          | 2728   |
| Japan (yen)           | 195.85 |
| Malaysia (ringgits)   | 6.0443 |
| Malta (lira)          | 0.6117 |
| Mexican (nuevo peso)  | 14.91  |
| Netherlands (guilder) | 3.0902 |
| New Zealand (\$)      | 2.9818 |
| Norway (krone)        | 12.12  |
| Portugal (escudos)    | 279.01 |
| Saudi Arabia (rials)  | 6.0444 |
| Singapore (\$)        | 2.5950 |
| Spain (pesetas)       | 232.94 |
| South Africa (rand)   | 9.0809 |
| Sweden (krone)        | 13.11  |
| Switzerland (francs)  | 2.7311 |
| Thailand (bahts)      | 55.03  |
| Turkey (liras)        | 478953 |
| USA (\$)              | 1.6204 |

# Record £2.5bn trade gap raises hopes of rate cut

BRITAIN'S DEFICIT on traded goods ballooned to £2.5bn in September, the largest monthly deficit since records began over 300 years ago. Analysts said the figures - which revealed falling export demand and a sharp rise in imports - increased the likelihood of another cut in interest rates before Christmas. Adam Cole at HSBC Securities said: "These data further increase the pressure for lower base rates with January still the most likely timing, but December looking an increasingly close call." The poor data knocked sentiment in the stock market, where the FTSE 100 index closed down 43 points at 5755.3.

## UK TRADE GAP



Low by 17 per cent, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said. Imports from both inside and outside the European Union were up, suggesting that the recent strength of the

pound is making domestically-produced goods look expensive. ABN Amro said: "The loss of competitiveness is encouraging import penetration." The 0.9 per cent fall in the prices of goods imported from outside the European Union suggests that crisis-hit economies in Asia are cutting prices in an attempt to stimulate demand, analysts said. The value of goods exported by the UK fell by 3.3 per cent in September to £13.3 bn. The ONS said that exports to East Asia had stabilised, although they remain some 30 per cent below normal. Exports to Russia are now languishing at £30m a month, 70 per cent below their 1997 average. "The fall in ex-

ports to Russia has primarily been over the last three months," the ONS said. Brian Wilson, Trade Minister, said: "Global economic problems, particularly in Asia, continue to have a serious negative impact on the overall figures. We cannot expect to be immune from these events." Nick Stamenkovic, chief economist at Bank Austria Creditanstalt Futures, said: "The figures were very disappointing indeed. They show the previous strength of the pound is still taking its toll." Trade in services is still holding up, according to ONS figures, despite the difficult business environment. September's surplus on



Drax, Britain's biggest and cleanest coal-fired power station goes on sale with a £2bn price tag as part of a National Power deal

# Nat Power in £2bn Drax sale

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST power station was put on sale yesterday with a £2bn price tag as part of a deal to allow National Power to buy an electricity supply business. The 4,000 megawatt Drax coal-fired station in North Yorkshire generates up to 10 per cent of Britain's electricity and consumes 10 million tonnes of coal a year. News that National Power was selling its flagship station accounting for 40 per cent of output, coupled with a 16 per cent decline in interim profits,

Midlands has 2.2 million domestic customers and made a profit on £19m last year from electricity supply. The acquisition of the business, which employs 1,400 people, will give National Power 12 per cent of the electricity supply market in England and Wales. In addition to the £180m purchase price, National Power will also take on an estimated £100m-£200m of liabilities arising out of Midlands' long-term contracts to buy electricity at high prices. It is likely that the regulator will impose condi-

tions on the deal, preventing National Power's generating arm selling electricity direct to the Midlands supply business. Trades unions last night voiced fears for jobs and called for an early meeting with the two companies. Drax, Britain's newest, most efficient and cleanest coal-fired station, opened in 1974. The nearby Selby coalfield was developed to supply the station and there is a railhead at Drax which takes supplies of coal direct from the pit complex. First half pre-tax profits fell

# Mandelson seeks a 'digital envoy'

FIRST THERE was the "drugs tsar". Then came the "millennium bug buster". Now Tony Blair plans to appoint a "digital envoy" to spearhead Britain's advance into the age of electronic commerce. The £90,000 post is being advertised this weekend and the Government hopes to make an appointment in the new year. Announcing the decision, Peter Mandelson, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry,

Parliament next year to promote electronic commerce. E-commerce will also be the centrepiece of the forthcoming White Paper from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The digital envoy will have the Prime Minister's personal authority and will champion the cause of electronic commerce, act as a public figurehead for the Government on the subject and promote the UK as

the world's leading centre in which to trade electronically. The post will be based on the salary and conditions of a senior civil servant. The envoy will have business experience, preferably in retailing and financial services or in information technology. A DTI spokesman conceded that given the pay on offer in the private sector it was possible that the chosen candidate would have to take a pay cut.

# Carlton picks Asda man, 34, as chief

BY NIGEL COPE AND PETER THAL LARSEN

CARLTON Communications, the television company led by Michael Green, yesterday appointed a 34-year-old marketing specialist as its new chief executive. Steven Cain, who is currently marketing director at Asda, will join Carlton in the new year. He will almost certainly be the youngest chief executive of a FTSE 100 company. He replaces June de Moller, Carlton's managing director, who announced her decision to retire in September.

The appointment surprised analysts who said Mr Cain has no experience of the media industry. But Carlton said the retail sector had groomed some of Britain's best managers and it was keen to capitalise on that expertise. "We wanted someone who is on the way up who can make their mark at Carlton," the company said. Mr Green, Carlton's chairman, said: "Steven was the outstanding candidate in a strong field." The decision to create the new post of chief executive is being seen as a sign of Carlton bedding up its senior management structure to reflect its heavy investment in digital television through ONdigital, its pay-television joint venture with Granada. Mr Green is not expected to scale back his involvement in the company.

Mr Cain, who is married with three children, has a career record remarkably similar to Archie Norman, Asda's chairman. He graduated from Imperial College before joining Bain & Co the management consultants. In 1989 he joined Kingfisher, the Woolworths and B&Q retailer, looking after group development and strategy. He left to join Asda in 1992 as marketing controller before joining the board 12 months ago. Paul Smiddy, of Credit Lyonnais said: "I wouldn't have thought that being marketing director of a domestic food retailer with a single business is the best preparation for running a multi-faceted, international operation."

## AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

### LONDON

LONDON SHARES yesterday closed down for the second day running hit by a bout of profit-taking and weaknesses on the world's major stock markets. The Footsie 100 blue chip index ended 43 easier at 5,755.3, struggling off news of the largest ever UK global trade deficit. The medium cap finished 2.5 higher at 4,926.4, after hardly moving all day, while the small cap closed 2.5 lower at 2,728.4. Profit-taking was ripe among financial stocks following the recent good run. Market Report, page 24

### NEW YORK

US STOCKS were mixed amid concern that the market's surge over the past six weeks, the second-fastest recovery from a bear market since World War Two, wasn't supported by the outlook for corporate profits. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 14.67 to 9,268.46 in early afternoon trading, extending Tuesday's 73-point loss, after bursting higher on Monday to a new all-time high of 9,374.27 that capped off a seven-week run that erased a 2,000 point plunge during the late summer.

### TOKYO

THE NIKKEI 225 index slumped from Tuesday's three-month high as investors bet share prices had outpaced earnings prospects. The Nikkei fell 91.17 points, or 0.6 per cent, to 15,073.47, after two days of gains. Honda and Sony accounted for a quarter of the decline. Industrial Bank of Japan and other lenders fell after Standard and Poor's, the US credit agency, said it may cut its credit ratings on nine Japanese banks, warning that the amount of money they planned to take to replenish their capital was inadequate.

### PARIS

BANK STOCKS again supported Paris blue-chips as the CAC-40 index ended 0.27 per cent, or 10.46 points, higher at 3,849.84. Volume was weaker than previous sessions as investors worried whether Wall Street's recent rally could be sustained. CCF led banks' gains on reports that the Italian San Paolo bank was considering taking a 20-25 per cent stake in it, traders said. CCF closed up 3.71 per cent while BNP ended up 4.07 per cent. Rhone-Poulenc provided the other big merger buzz.

### MILAN

SHARES CLOSED higher on Bank of Italy rate cut hopes, a firm dollar and investor bargain hunting, dealers said. The Mibtel index closed 300 points higher, or 1.41 per cent, to 22,159 while the Mib30 rose 451 to 32,679. Fiat closed 6.49 per cent higher on speculation of a reorganisation of the Agnelli family's assets including Fiat. An earlier report said that Fiat received 6,200 orders from Italian dealerships for its new Multipla model in two days. National air carrier Alitalia fell 60 to 5,755 on profit-taking.



E



# There is much to fear from Japan rescue plan

WHAT IF the world is urging the wrong solution to Japan's problems? The political upheaval in Japan this week has led to fears that the emergency economic package now before the Diet might be threatened. But there surely should be a deeper concern: maybe it is the wrong package.

I have just been looking at two things: the outline of the package itself and the deterioration of Japan's fiscal position. Neither is a pretty sight.

The reports of the package have focused almost entirely on three of its facets: the efforts to shore up the financial system; the fiscal boost; and the novel idea, already introduced in an earlier version of the plan, of "helicopter money" - giving spending vouchers to the under-16-year-olds and to people eligible for public welfare assistance, to be spent within six months.

Each of those aspects of the plan has been greeted with various concerns: whether, for example, the banking system will really be able to re-establish public confidence; whether the public works/tax cuts are well targeted; whether the gift vouchers are really a sensible way of using tax revenue. (The administrative charges for running the scheme will mop up more than 12 per cent of the total cost.)

The reports of the scheme did not pay much attention, however, to its wider aim, which is to start a refocusing of the entire Japanese economy. Until I read through the provisional translation of the outline I had not realised that there is a lot of detailed planning going into the redirection of growth away from production of goods and towards improvements in lifestyle.

As any visitor to the country will appreciate there are many aspects of the lifestyle which are very attractive: the cleanliness, order and safety of its cities for example. But there are also aspects that could clearly be better - where people do not live as well as they should. So it is encouraging that the package includes a plan to double the size of living space. Larger houses would not only enormous-



HAMISH MCRAE

*The problem is that these ideas are hardly credible, given the make-believe tone of the rest of it*

ly improve the quality of life; they would also create more space both for additional consumer durables and for additional people. This last point matters. Along with Italy and Germany, Japan has one of the lowest fertility rates of the G7.

The problem is that these ideas are hardly credible, given the make-believe tone of much of the rest of the plan. Thus there are assurances that the economy will achieve growth in 1999. I suppose that is possible, but anyone who has spent time with Japanese officials will know that sometimes official words mean nothing. If, therefore, the economic objectives are not met, the very sensible social and lifestyle objectives may also be undermined.

The dangers that arise if the economic objectives are not met grow almost daily. Just yesterday, it emerged from the Ministry of Fi-

nance that Japan might face a £50bn revenue shortfall from lower receipts from corporation taxation. MoF officials fear that the budget deficit could reach 10 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Now have a look at the graph. It shows the Japanese general government deficit over the last nine years, together with forecasts for the next two. The government was running a surplus 10 years ago and a manageable deficit through the Nineties. But now the country is facing a fiscal catastrophe. A budget deficit of 10 per cent? That is the sort of thing you would expect from Russia. At no time during the entire post-war period has Britain run a deficit on that scale, even when we lost control of public spending in the mid Seventies.

Indeed, the actual position is even worse than the one set out in the graph, which only covers central government. You have to add local government borrowing, which could bring the total public-sector financial balance to 12 per cent of GDP in 1999. No wonder Japan's debt rating has been downgraded by Moody's, the United States rating agency.

If a fiscal policy appears not to be credible, people freeze. Lenders freeze, consumers freeze; companies freeze. People know that whatever is happening will have to be reversed, and save for the coming rainy day. That is precisely the danger Japan faces now. Conventional wisdom holds that given the overriding need to boost demand, it is right to run a larger fiscal deficit. The

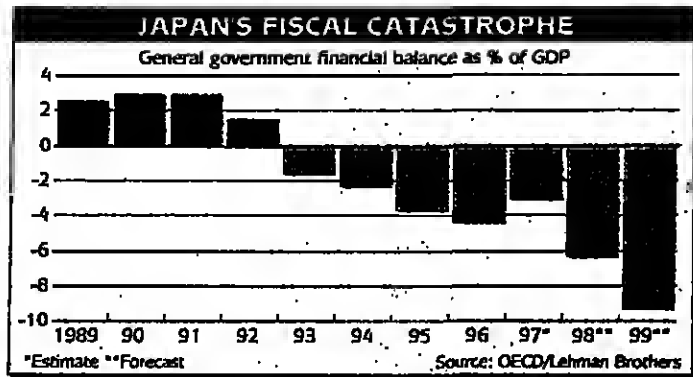
dreadful truth may be that this is wrong: that running a deficit which is not credible will actually have the perverse effect of cutting demand.

This will take place for several reasons. Most obviously if the larger deficit were to push up long-term interest rates, the additional borrowing by the public sector would be likely to be offset by lower borrowing by the private sector. This has not happened yet. There has been a widening of the "Japan premium" in the financial markets - the rate at which their banks borrow from other banks above the normal inter-bank rate. That reflects foreign concern about their credit-worthiness. Concern about the government's credit-worthiness (as opposed to the banks') has not yet pushed up bond yields, which are ludicrously low. The levels of domestic savings are so enormous that funding the deficit is not yet a financial problem, and it may never become one.

But there is a difference between a financial problem and a psychological one. If Japanese people feel the government is being irresponsible by borrowing so much, they may themselves simply save more - and thereby offset any fiscal boost the additional spending might generate.

In short, the Keynesian pump-priming being urged on Japan may not work. Worse, it may actually have the perverse effect of cutting demand because of its impact on confidence. Everyone knows that a lot of Japanese public investment is of poor quality. If a country borrows for stupid projects people realise that sooner or later they will have to foot the bill.

So what is to be done? The answer is to deregulate and to cut personal taxation: to do what the US and Britain have done to convince ordinary people that it is reasonable that if they work hard they should enjoy the fruits of that work. It is a novel idea in Japan. But expect to hear much more of it in the months to come. Meanwhile, outsiders should resist urging the Japanese government to borrow more money: they will not have to pay back the debts.



## Tina Turner wins despite Iron Maiden's charms

MARTIN GOODCHILD, recently installed managing partner of the accountants Pannell Kerr Forster, proudly sports two gold discs on his office wall, both million-sellers by head-banging heavy metal heroes Iron Maiden.

It turns out that Mr Goodchild helped to set up a management consultancy called Sanctuary whose chief client is Iron Maiden. He is no longer a director, but still retains an affection for the link.

So is Mr Goodchild a head-banger himself, I ask?

"No, no, I'm much more Tina Turner."

ONE BRANCH of the Rothschild family has put Exbury Garden Nurseries up for sale, a world-famous centre in the New Forest for propagating exotic rhododendrons and azaleas.

The nurseries are being sold by Edmund "Eddie" de Rothschild, second cousin to Sir Evelyn de Rothschild, chairman of the eponymous investment bank NM Rothschild. Edmund's father, Lionel de Rothschild, carved out 70 acres of gardens from the New Forest after the First World War. The nurseries, however, have been so successful - attracting visitors from as far afield as Japan and the United States - that a new owner is needed to fund expansion.

So, if you fancy bidding for one of the world's best growers of camelias and pieris, get your offer in to Simon White of Deloitte & Touche in Southampton, who is handling the sale for the family.

CHARLES ALLEN, chief executive of Granada, startled analysts yesterday

## PEOPLE AND BUSINESS BY JOHN WILLCOCK

JAMES CROSBY, the new Halifax chief executive, will have a job and a half to integrate the Birmingham Midshires into the group. Opposition to the recent £750m takeover comes from the most unexpected quarters.

The Save Our Building Societies Campaign has received a letter from a Mrs GE Buckingham of Bridgwater, Somerset. The lady declares herself "pleased to support" the anti-demutualisation movement.

But who is Mrs GE Buckingham? A call to the Bridgwater branch of Birmingham Midshires solves the mystery. "She doesn't work here, but she is the wife of the area manager, Robert Buckingham", a helpful receptionist tells me. Oh dear, Mr Crosby, with friends like that...

when he started enthusing about "soap bubbles". Was the media group about to expand into soaps and detergents, they wondered?

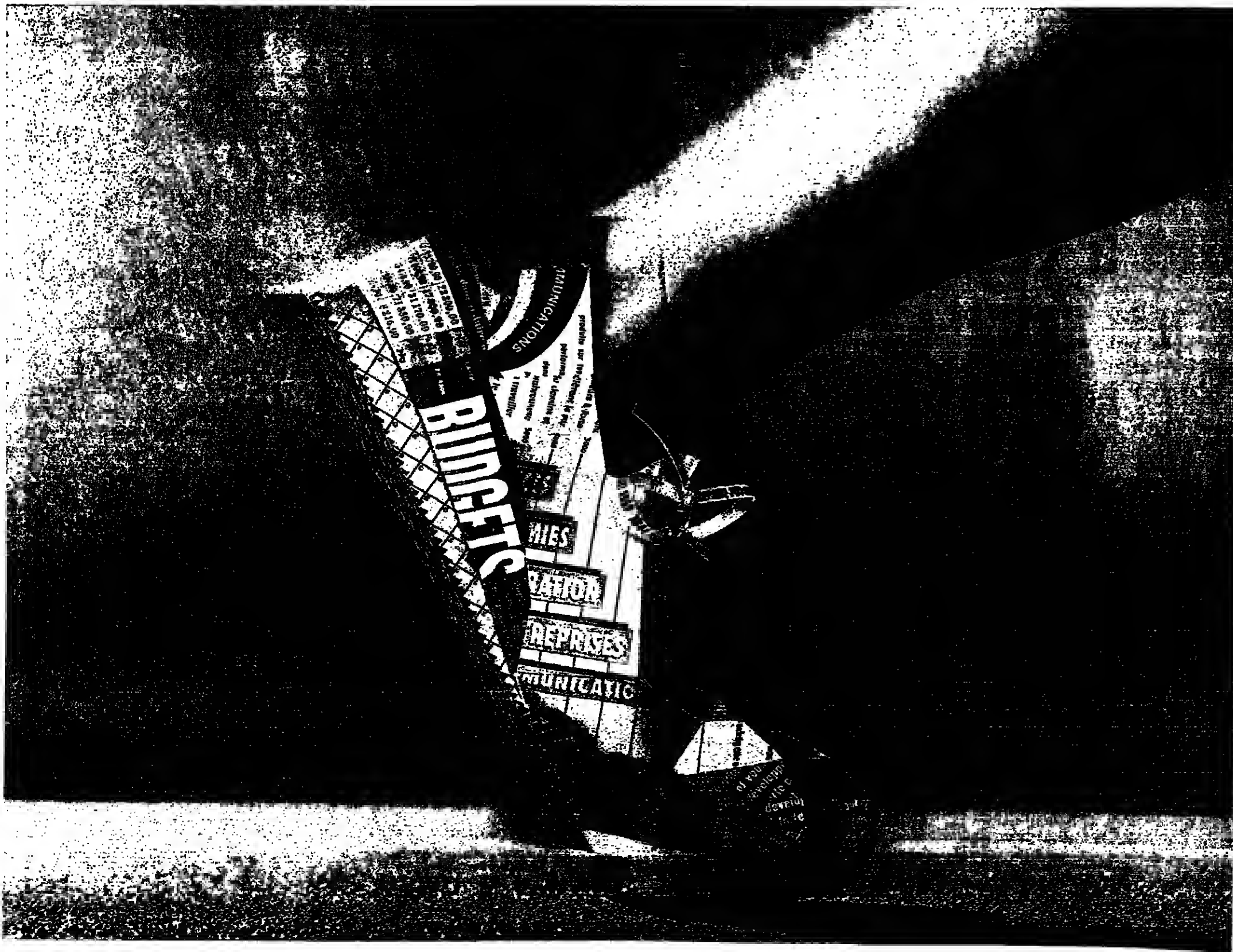
In fact, the broadcasting boss was referring to the practice of spinning off programmes from existing soap operas - such as the recent video of *Coronation Street*. Mr Allen is now pondering a full-length film of *Corry*, he added, for OnDigital, the channel of which Granada owns a half.

### COMPANY RESULTS

| Name                             | Turnover (£)      | Pre-tax (£)      | EPS             | Dividend        | Pay day  | X-div    |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Alcanex Pacer plc (F)            | 95.6m (98.9m)     | 7.0m (10.0m)     | 11.1p (14.8p)   | 6.6p (6.0p)     | 22.01.99 | 07.12.98 |
| Advanced Power Cables (F)        | 6.19m (5.28m)     | 0.500m (0.365m)  | 3.0p (2.3p)     | 1.2p (1.7p)     | 03.03.99 | 07.12.98 |
| Balchwil Industrial Services (F) | 16.42m (14.03m)   | 2.31m (1.74m)    | 9.8p (8.7p)     | 1.2p (1.7p)     | 15.04.99 | 03.03.99 |
| Bauer Chemicals plc (F)          | 21.08m (24.72m)   | 14.02m (16.50m)  | 8.40p (1.23p)   | 0.0p (0.0p)     | 15.01.99 | 07.12.98 |
| British Water plc (F)            | 33.47m (31.82m)   | 7.81m (7.16m)    | 108.3p (89.5p)  | 15.44p (16.0p)  | 14.04.99 | 07.12.98 |
| British Water Holdings plc (F)   | 35.91m (40.43m)   | 8.65m (8.11m)    | 109.2p (84.2p)  | 18.50p (17.15p) | 14.04.99 | 07.12.98 |
| Carlisle Systems plc (F)         | 8.80m (8.28m)     | 0.64m (0.51m)    | 2.63p (1.96p)   | -               | -        | -        |
| Elvstrom Cashless Systems (F)    | 3.80m (3.25m)     | 0.140m (0.245m)  | 0.75p (1.25p)   | -               | -        | -        |
| FWP International (F)            | 181.03m (114.08m) | 11.32m (10.70m)  | 11.28p (10.68p) | 2.62p (2.43p)   | 22.01.99 | 07.12.98 |
| Granada Group (F)                | 3.08m (2.40m)     | 773.0m (681.0m)  | 60.9p (53.4p)   | 16.7p (14.5p)   | 01.04.99 | 04.01.99 |
| Johnson Matthey (F)              | 1.703m (1.317m)   | 61.2m (61.2m)    | 22.0p (22.1p)   | 5.7p (5.2p)     | 01.05.99 | 07.12.98 |
| Morison Construction Group (F)   | 187.81m (156.45m) | 7.59m (6.88m)    | 7.71p (6.86p)   | 1.96p (1.80p)   | 04.01.99 | 07.12.98 |
| Muskel Power (F)                 | 1.352m (1.498m)   | 217.2m (250.0m)  | 14.7p (17.1p)   | 8.4p (9.0p)     | 05.04.99 | 07.12.98 |
| NEP (F)                          | 25.35m (11.81m)   | 7.77m (3.22m)    | 8.19p (5.55p)   | 6.49p (2.5p)    | 08.04.99 | 07.12.98 |
| Providence Resources (F)         | 91.0 (48.0m)      | -0.97m (-)       | 23.1p (-)       | -               | -        | -        |
| Radstone Technology (F)          | 10.02m (10.00m)   | -0.740m (-1.17m) | -1.15p (-7.00p) | -               | -        | -        |
| Radstone (F)                     | 633 (-)           | -1.57m (-1.11m)  | -0.8p (-0.5p)   | -               | -        | -        |
| Tate & Lyle (F)                  | 4.47m (4.42m)     | 105.4m (158.2m)  | 27.4p (22.8p)   | 17.1p (-)       | 06.04.99 | 07.12.98 |
| Victoria (F)                     | 17.1m (18.7m)     | 0.472m (0.000m)  | 4.81p (3.82p)   | 0.0p (-)        | -        | -        |

(F) = Fiscal (F) = Interim After exceptional

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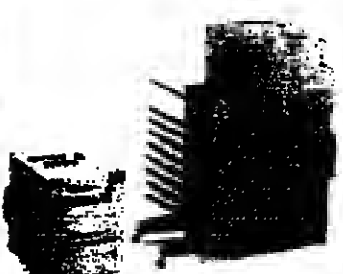
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## SPORT

Playing standards are the highest ever but falling sponsorship and an ongoing civil war threatens the game's future

# Dark tale of snooker and strife

By GUY HODGSON

TODAY A cameo will be played out which will illustrate the dark depths snooker is currently exploring. A white-haired, 61-year-old man will arrive at the Liverpool Victoria UK Championships and immediately be monitored by security guards. He can only go to the BBC commentary box and then leave. He cannot visit a cafe, the bar or the press room or take a swim even though the Bournemouth International Centre has leisure facilities.

The man is not a spy or a saboteur but Clive Everton, a journalist and commentator who has been the chief chronicler, an evangelist even, of the sport for 27 years. His crime, according to the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, is a series of articles that have questioned the wisdom and integrity of the governing body. Hence the restrictions.

Everton, it ought to be added here, is snooker correspondent of this paper's sister publication, the *Independent on Sunday*, but this is not an examination of the rights and wrongs of his case. His treatment is a symptom of a civil war raging through snooker, not the cause. A conflict that threatens the future of the sport.

On the table things could hardly be better. Television viewing figures are boding up so well the BBC has abandoned its policy of placing it in the nether regions of the schedules (the final frames of the UK Championship will be shown live on Sunday) and playing standards are undeniably higher than ever.

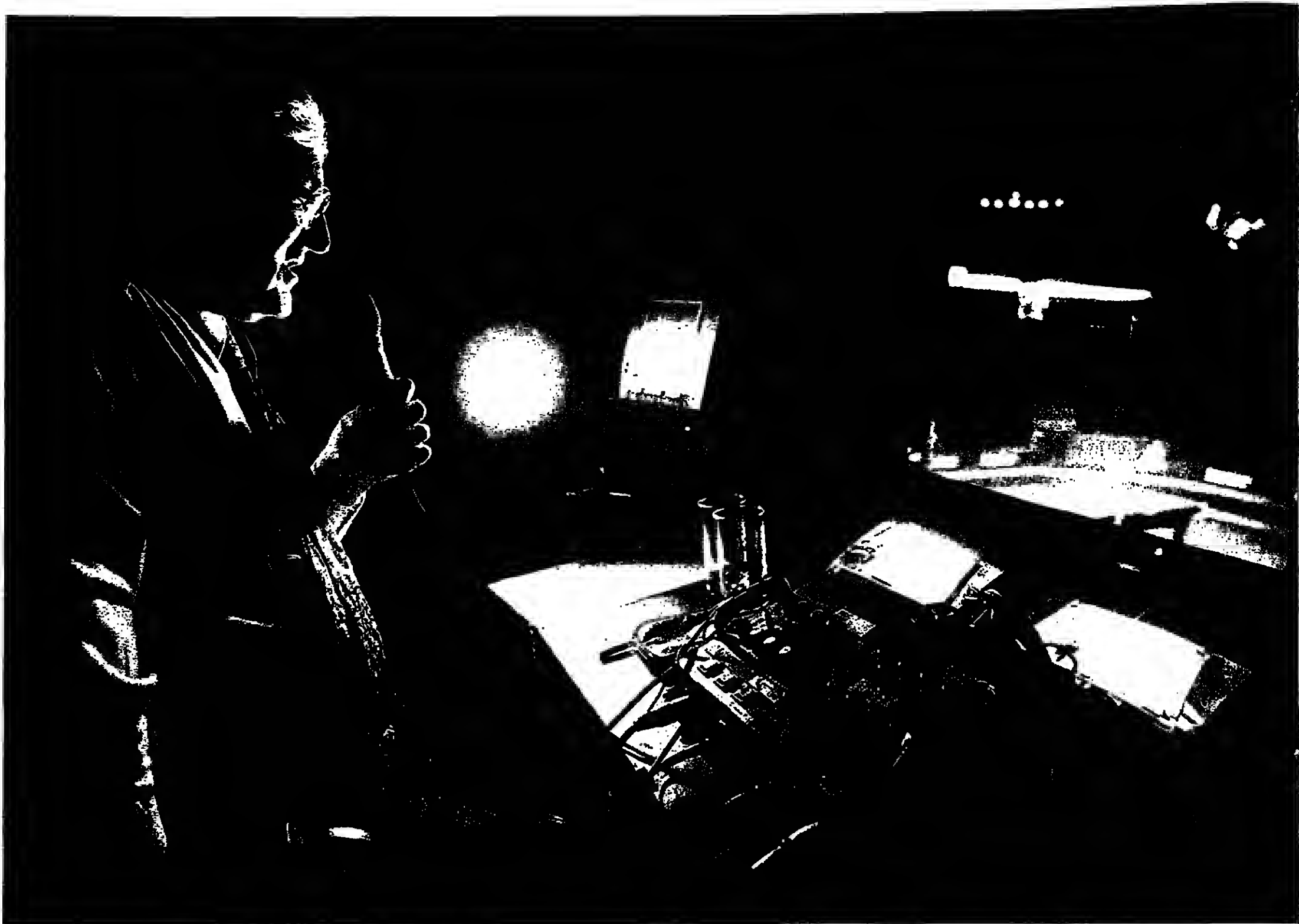
"In my heyday I played a man in the first round who potted like he had two broken arms," Steve Davis, the 41-year-old six-times world champion, said quantifying the improvement, "and it wasn't until the quarter-finals that I entertained the thought of losing. Now you turn up and straight out of the traps you are up against a kid who has made five 147s in practice the previous day and who doesn't give a damn about your reputation."

The game is fine, thriving even; it is away from the haze and bright lights that the mood deteriorates. A sport that can command television figures that comfortably outstrip Wimbledon and the Open Golf Championship ought to have companies falling over themselves to sponsor tournaments, but snooker is down to five - Embassy, Benson and Hedges, Regal, Rothmans and Liverpool Victoria. Compare that to the 24 who poured money in between 1986 and 1990 and you can appreciate the decline.

That inevitably means smaller prizes and the winner at the Bournemouth International Centre on Sunday week will get £75,000, £5,000 less than Doug Mountjoy received when he won the UK Championship, snooker's second most important title, 10 years ago.

A year ago Rex Williams attributed the lack of corporate backing to internal squabbling within the WPBSA, but since he reassumed the chairmanship in March 1997 the arguments have got louder and more bitter. Last December the chief executive, Jim McKenzie, was dismissed and will pursue a case of wrongful dismissal in the courts on 11 January; in the summer the head of media relations, Bruce Beckett, and the long-standing tournament director, Ann Yates, left; in June three former world champions, Steve Davis, Terry Griffiths and Dennis Taylor, unsuccessfully pursued a vote of no confidence in the board.

There are other issues, including an ongoing dispute with Benson and Hedges over the alleged behaviour of the WPBSA company secretary, Martyn Blake, at two dinner parties, and relations with the media have become so strained



Clive Everton, commentating at Bournemouth, is confined to the television gantry because of restrictions following articles which questioned the wisdom and integrity of snooker's governing body Peter Jay

that Radio Five Live refuse to carry voice reports from Bournemouth and the Snooker Writers' Association has been re-formed because of alarm at the way the sport is being run. The atmosphere is close to poisonous.

McKenzie's dismissal is seen as the flashpoint in the great war that has followed. In simple terms - and very little is simple in this conflict - it is a difference over whether snooker should be run by professionals or the combination of former players

*'The guys on the board are pals of mine. This is not a personal attack, we just feel snooker is not going anywhere'*

and small businessmen who hitherto have been in charge.

Most leading players, including the world champion, John Higgins, and the previous two, Ken Doherty and Stephen Hendry, back the Davis-Griffiths-Taylor triumvirate who argue the current WPBSA board do not have the expertise to run a multi-million pound sport and men from the City should be appointed. But there are high-profile supporters of the current regime, too, including John Parrott, Alan McManus and Willie

Thorne, and there was enough of the rank and file with them to defeat June's no-confidence motion by four votes.

The sadness is that it has pitted former friends against each other, which does not bode well for a wholesome atmosphere in the future no matter who is successful. "What upsets me with all the infighting over the years," Taylor, the 1985 champion, said, "is that the guys on the board, people like Bob Close, Rex and Jim Meadowcroft, are great pals of mine. This is not a personal attack, we just feel snooker is not going anywhere."

"It's not about egos, but saving the game. I've had a great living from snooker, I've travelled the world, and it would be nice to think today's youngsters will get the same chance as I did. But that prospect looks doubtful at the moment."

Last week a committee looking into the constitution of the WPBSA published an interim report that recommended the creation of two subsidiary companies to run the commercial affairs of snooker and billiards and be answerable to a new board of 10 members. It is a compromise and might win approval but no one is holding their breath.

Snooker's experience over many years is that conflict is easier to locate than solutions. We are not watching a sport committing suicide, it is too established for that, but it is indulging in self-mutilation.

Snooker has many grievances at the moment but the one most pertinent hits the pocket. This has

## Davis fights 'boardroom amateurs'

Former world champion seeks solution to a power struggle. By Guy Hodgson

STEVE DAVIS is a reluctant revolutionary. The administration of snooker, he says, is boring and ought to be left to professionals, yet for much of 1998 he has been at loggerheads with the sport's governing body, the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association. Events can make firebrands out of anybody.

In June, Davis, along with fellow former world champions, Terry Griffiths and Dennis Taylor, unsuccessfully tried to oust the current WPBSA board with a vote of no confidence and now he and they are preparing for change from within by getting elected on to the executive. The atmosphere, he says, "has not been pleasant".

Davis has been provoked into action because he believes snooker has become too big to be handled by former players. "My chief problem is that we have had amateurs in the boardroom who have made decisions which make them look like incompetents," he said. "Which is unfair because all the people who have been on the board for generations have had the game's interest at heart. But if they appear that way your problems start."

Snooker has many grievances at the moment but the one most pertinent hits the pocket. This has

manifested itself most notably in the lack of sponsors for tournaments and a drop in prize-money. Get those right and the rest might, just might, clear themselves up.

"Sponsorship is a funny thing and sports go in and out of fashion," Davis said, "but I think snooker's here to stay and I think we are failing to get our foot in the door of bigger companies. We haven't got the right chief executive who can talk to these people at the proper level. Snooker players pot balls, they

spend their lives training to do that, it's unfair to expect them to do more. They are not good in the boardroom or as salesmen. We have never given people from business a proper chance of having an interest in our game and it has to be tried."

Davis can at least see some light in the interim report published last week by the WPBSA's constitutional review committee which proposes wholesale changes to the game's government structure, setting up businesses to run snooker and bil-

liards that will report to a reconstructed board. "If those proposals were given a chance they could be the answer because the board as we know it would relinquish power anyway," he said.

"I don't know if the report will be accepted, but it could be a way forward as it will cut through the problems that have upset the players: the them-and-us situation and the lack of business acumen. At the same time, control will be retained by the players. Hopefully the board will think that way, too."

The WPBSA and their chairman, Rex Williams, preferred not to discuss the current situation. "No interviews or comments will be made by the association regarding any political matters in our sport while the Liverpool Victoria UK Championship is taking place," a statement read, "in order that our sponsors, players and the public can enjoy this prestigious tournament without any external distractions."

"Should anyone else associated with our sport wish to risk losing a loyal and valued sponsor by making political comments at this time there is nothing we can do to stop them. Though this, of course, would be absurd and reckless and is something that would be pointed out to our members."



Head to head: Steve Davis (left) and chairman Rex Williams

## Tremors suggest a football earthquake lies ahead

WITH A cigar in one hand and a Scotch in the other, a man who has my affection and respect was going on about how it feels personally to be around in a sporting era when every week seems to bring fresh evidence of instability. "This may be carrying things a bit far," he said, "but I imagine it's like living in an earthquake zone, feeling a tremor beneath your feet and fearing that a disaster is about to happen."

The tremors felt in English football this week, and nobody should take them lightly, spread from the sale of two Premier League players, Andy Impey from West Ham to Leicester and Duncan Ferguson from Everton to Newcastle, against the wishes of the team managers. In Ferguson's case, it appears



KEN JONES

that a £7m deal was put through without prior consultation with Everton's manager, Walter Smith, raising the thought that his position is now untenable. Harry Redknapp

knew about West Ham's decision to sell Impey but there was nothing he could do to prevent it happening.

These deals have told us something about the financial situation in English football to which the majority of supporters are oblivious and give no second thought when calling belligerently for changes in personnel.

The truth, and a hard truth it is for their supporters to swallow, is that the majority of clubs in the Premier League are facing up to the difficulties caused by salary escalation, exaggerated transfer values and contractual obligations to players who are no longer serving any useful purpose.

By way of relief from the screaming meemies induced by television

hyperbole, I spend some time talking to people in sport who can be relied on for objective appraisal. All agree that sport, especially football, is on dangerous ground and that there may be a day up ahead when the tremors we are feeling now develop into a financial catastrophe. "It's often said these days that football has never been more fashionable, and I suppose that's a fact," one of them said, "but the one sure thing about fashion is that it changes."

It's anybody's guess how close we are to upheaval but the time cannot be far off when sport falls completely into the hands of entrepreneurs who hold no respect for its traditions and ancient values. Earlier this week I spoke with a

former rugby union international of much standing who views with trepidation the very real possibility that BBC television will next year lose the Five Nations' Championship to Rupert Murdoch. "If that happens there are bound to be changes in the way rugby is played," he said. "High-scoring games, perhaps unlimited substitutions, players selected solely as place kickers. Instead of two halves, four quarters to accommodate television commercials."

There are, no doubt, plenty of people who regard any change as change for the better. They can point to how things were and argue that nobody can clearly remember the extent of opposition to live football on television or how long it is

(37 years) since footballers in England had no say in their personal futures and were restricted to a maximum wage of £20 per week. They can ridicule the old Football League's refusal to allow their champions into Europe on the archaic grounds that it would be detrimental to domestic competition.

What they can't argue, however, is that football, and sport generally, has lost nothing through modernisation. In moments of idleness, when I'm trying to work up some creative thought, I sometimes think about football as it was before agents came along to devalue loyalty.

A question recently put is how many footballers wake up grateful for being paid, in many cases more

than the heads of corporations, to play a game. A pretty safe bet is that not many allow that consideration to intrude upon their musings.

In the light of events at West Ham and Everton, it's probably just beginning to occur to followers of football that the prime consideration of most clubs is now financial stability.

From Redknapp's remarks in newspapers and television he feels that West Ham's decision to accept Leicester's offer for Impey was a blow to his authority over the team. Sympathy can be held out for Redknapp. But the way things are going his experience is something football managers will have to live with. Either that or seek alternative employment.

Handwritten signature: J. P. Jones















# Ferguson discovers the power of speech

It's good to talk, Newcastle's £7m signing is ready to admit – and Scotland's coach may be his next call. By John Donoghue

DUNCAN FERGUSON yesterday reopened the lines of communication with his international coach, Craig Brown, and dropped his first hint that he is prepared to rethink his decision never to play again for Scotland.

With Ruud Gullit, his new club manager at Newcastle, keen to encourage a repatriation, and Ferguson himself at least prepared to listen, there is some prospect that Brown may be able to utilise the outgoing Everton captain en route to the European Championship finals.

Football's great recluse has decided that the time is now right for dialogue – not just with the Scottish Football Association, whose members were struck from his Christmas card list last season, but with the rest of the outside world, too.

Ferguson, the footballer who simply refuses to involve himself as an interviewee, just about talked his head off yesterday when he was presented to the media at St James' Park following his £7m transfer, which will be worth a further £1m to Everton after 30 games.

The 26-year-old striker, who last played for his country two seasons ago against Estonia in Monaco, said: "At the moment what happens at Newcastle is closest to my thoughts, but in the future it could be Scotland. We will just have to wait and see."

It is surprising what a blast of cold north-east air can do for the soul.

There was not even a press conference to mark his £4.4m move from Rangers to Everton in October 1994. Yet the man with the Trappist touch even hinted that this might not prove to be simply a once in a lifetime offer.

"I have always been uncomfortable in front of the cameras," he said. "I decided I just didn't want to speak to people. I carried that over from Scotland. Maybe now it's time I started to speak to some of the press people."

It is a process to which he is surprisingly well suited, as he demonstrated before heading off for a training session in readiness for Saturday's home game against Wimbledon. Ferguson talked at length about his bond with Everton fans and the hopes he has for the partnership he is about to forge with Alan Shearer.

"I had a great relationship with the Everton fans, a great rapport," Ferguson said. "I showed loyalty to them, they showed loyalty to me – and that will never change."

"That is probably why a part of me will always be at Goodison. You can't just switch off like that. I will miss them. But it was Everton who put me up for sale and didn't want me. Newcastle did want me, and that was good enough for me."

"Once I realised they were interested it became an easy decision, it took me about an hour. But I was surprised Everton were



Laughing Magpies: Newcastle's latest recruit, the £7m Scot Duncan Ferguson (left), and manager Ruud Gullit yesterday PA

prepared to sell considering their position in the League. Obviously, that was part of the agenda and, if they think it is going to benefit the club, then that is up to them. I believe other clubs did show interest, but I only spoke to Newcastle."

Gullit, who disclosed that he first tried to sign Ferguson during his days as Chelsea's player-manager, believes he will take the weight off Shearer whose own Tyneside future remains in doubt.

When the subject of the England captain was again raised yesterday, the Newcastle chairman, Freddy Shepherd, prevented any debate. "Can I just stop that," he said. "This is Duncan Ferguson's day, not Alan Shearer's."

So as long as Shearer is around, Ferguson hopes to make the most of it, saying: "Anyone would benefit

playing alongside someone like Alan. But I don't think you could say I can bring the best out of him. He is a quality player, one of the world's best, and has proved he can do the business on his own."

Gullit, whose predecessors Kevin Keegan and Kenny Dalglish virtually had an open cheque book, has had to sell two players in Steve Watson (to Aston Villa) and Stéphane Guivarch (Rangers) to fund this transfer. Though the climate may change, he must have serious doubts about whether he will ever get his hands on a Keegan £80m or Dalglish's £24m.

Ferguson, whose newly signed five-and-a-half year contract is reputedly worth in excess of £10m, may now play for Scotland again – a thought he not so long ago found unpalatable after the way he thought the Scottish FA showed its colours

in the wake of the John McStay affair. Ferguson was not only banned for 12 matches after head-butting the Raith Rovers player, but was also carted off to Glasgow's Barlinnie jail for his sins. What Ferguson wondered was where the Scottish FA was when he needed its support.

Time, including time served, it would seem, is a great healer. While Gullit says he will not force the player into a corner, he does believe a reconciliation should be effected.

Gullit said: "I would like him to play for Scotland again. It is good for any player to turn out for his country. Duncan has had difficulties with Scotland in the past but I believe these difficulties can be overcome. But I am not going to force him to do anything."

For Newcastle's chief executive, Freddie Fletcher, who put together

the deal over which manager Water Smith almost quit Everton, it is a piece of business he unsuccessfully tried to negotiate on Keegan's behalf five years ago, when Ferguson played for Dundee United.

Fletcher can well understand why Gullit has followed in Keegan's transfer footsteps, observing: "You don't have to be a rocket scientist to see where we were lacking."

So, at long last, Newcastle have a centre-forward who can dominate opponents in the air. The fans will not have seen the like of Ferguson since Wyn "The Leap" Davies inspired them to win their last piece of silverware, the old Fairs Cup, back in 1969.

Davies, who was just as taciturn, ended up working in a Lancashire bakery after football. Maybe that gives Ferguson food for thought.

## Elleray denies Gregory's claim

DAVID ELLERAY, the Premier League referees' spokesman, has denied claims from the Aston Villa manager, John Gregory, that his controversial striker Stan Collymore is a marked man with match officials.

Gregory launched his outburst in the aftermath of Saturday's Premiership match against Liverpool when Collymore was sent off for two bookable offences – the first for a horror tackle on Steve Harkness which left him with damaged knee ligaments. But the Villa manager insisted that Collymore "never gets a free-kick or much protection" and that "referees are judging him before he steps on to the pitch."

Gregory, who will be without the £7m striker for the match against Manchester United in 10 days' time, urged officials to "treat him as a footballer, not as Stan Collymore."

Elleray insisted, however, there was no truth in Gregory's claims. "We are all trained to be totally objective," he said. "Given the fact we are under so much scrutiny, if there was evidence of someone being marked out for treatment by a referee, I am sure it would be spotted."

"The difficulty that referees have in dealing with high-profile players is that some people will feel, whatever a referee does, that he is being too strict or letting the player get away with murder. We get criticism both ways."

Gregory, who yesterday placed a £5m price tag on the out-of-favour striker Julian Joachim, is still refusing to say whether he has taken any action against Collymore for the challenge on Harkness.

Meanwhile, Gregory looks set to be without the services of his goalkeeper Mark Bosnich at Nottingham Forest on Saturday. The Australian, who has missed the last six games, is still struggling to overcome the shoulder injury suffered at Coventry in early October.

The Huddersfield captain Barry Horne will be out of action for the next 10 weeks because of medial ligament damage to his knee. The former Wales midfielder had a scan on his right knee yesterday after picking up the injury in Saturday's Yorkshire derby win over Bradford City.

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## SPORT

AGASSI'S HANOVER HITCH P29 • FERGUSON TALKS OF TARTAN RETURN P30

## Ferri across the Mersey for Houllier

GERARD HOULLIER'S first excursion into the transfer market as the sole Liverpool manager was to bring a fellow Frenchman to Merseyside yesterday. Jean-Michel Ferri, a 29-year-old defensive midfielder, became Houllier's first signing when he paid Istanbulspor £1.2m for the uncapped player.

Ferri apparently caught Houllier's eye when he played for Nantes, where he was rated highly, but has failed to settle in Turkey.

Craig Hignett completed a £800,000 move from Aberdeen to Barnsley yesterday, admitting it was the prospect of being reunited with his former Midlands through colleague and friend, John Heodrie, that persuaded him to travel south.

After Hignett had agreed a two-and-a-half-year contract, he said it would be difficult coming to terms with the fact that Heodrie is now his boss.

"I'm still getting used to calling him 'gaffer'," he admitted. "But that doesn't mean I expect any favours from him at this club. If I'm not doing it I expect to get dropped."

Hignett's fee will be part funded by the £450,000 departure of Jan Åge Fjørtoft, who is in talks with the German side Eintracht Frankfurt.

Paul Warhurst, who has made 24 appearances for Palace since his transfer in the summer of 1997, has joined Bolton Wanderers on a month's loan. Warhurst, 29, has recently admitted that he wishes to move back north after periods at Blackburn and Sheffield Wednesday and his family have already returned.

Frank Lampard, the England Under-21 captain and subject of an £8m offer from Tottenham, has said he will be staying at West Ham, where he believes his ambitions can be fulfilled.

The Hammers have told

FOOTBALL  
BY ANDREW MARTIN

George Graham that the talented young midfielder is happy to remain at Upton Park, where his father, Frank Sur, is assistant manager to Harry Redknapp.

The West Ham chief executive, Peter Sturrie, said: "We did have an offer from Tottenham but we are not interested in selling. They telephoned me and then they telephoned Harry - they were persistent at least. But Harry told them no, and I told them no. He is not for sale."

The 20-year-old believes that the east Londoners are capable of qualifying for a European place this season following a promising start to the Premiership season.

He said: "I signed a five-year contract earlier this season which was a commitment from me and my ambition is to play for England while at West Ham. I want to go on and do great things for West Ham United and England - and I think I can fulfil everything I want from football at West Ham."

"Realistically this season we have got to look at Europe as the main aim. We are often classified as a cup team who can beat anyone on their day but we have been striving to get consistency into our game."

"Last season away from home we sometimes became a bit ruffled but we have learnt from that, are more experienced, more together as a team and more confident. We are more solid away from home and if we can keep that going and carry on with our home form we have every chance of being in the top five or six."

Lampard admitted: "I don't think I've played as well as I can do this season but maybe that is because I've had to play a

deeper role, with Steve Lomas being out injured for a spell.

"I haven't been able to get forward and make runs into the box, which is my strength. But overall I think I am a much improved player when I first got into the side at West Ham."

"I was disappointed not to get into the England squad last week but I've played well in the last few games for the Under-21s and it's up to me to keep battling away and hope the chance will come."

Juventus are planning to lobby Uefa, football's European governing body, to have their Champions' League tie against Galatasaray in Istanbul postponed again next week because of their continuing fears over the diplomatic crisis between Italy and Turkey.

The tie, originally scheduled for last night but already called off, has been caught up in the future over Italy's refusal to extradite the Kurdish rebel leader, Abdullah Ocalan, who is wanted in Turkey on treason and terrorism charges. It has been postponed until 2 December because of the current wave of anti-Italian feeling in Turkey. The club feared both players and supporters would be at risk if they travelled to Istanbul.

Coventry City's teenage striker, Laurent Delorge, woke up yesterday facing the prospect of a lengthy lay-off. The 19-year-old Delorge, who has yet to play for the first team, broke his left leg in an innocuous challenge with the former Coventry player, David Smith, in a reserve match with Grimsby at Highfield Road on Tuesday.

The Brazil coach, Wanderley Luxemburgo, has been handed a 60-day suspension by the country's disciplinary tribunal of sport for hursting into a referee's changing room and verbally abusing him.



The Scotland team practise their line-out at the Livingston training ground yesterday

## Scotland pursue full-back gamble

## RUGBY UNION

GREGORY TOWNSEND has been handed his first international start at full-back for Scotland's World Cup qualifier with Portugal on Saturday.

The Lions stand-off will pull on the navy blue No 15 jersey after impressing there as an early replacement for the injured Derrick Lee in last weekend's 35-10 defeat to South Africa. Originally dropped for the Springboks match in favour of Duncan Hodge, the 25-year-old now has an outstanding chance to prove his long-term potential at full-back in what should be a landslide Scotland victory.

Keith Wood, the Lions hooker, earned a full recall to the Ireland side yesterday but will not return as captain in Saturday's Test against South Africa at Lansdowne Road.

The Irish selectors, who retained the lock Paddy Johns in that role, announced a team showing six changes from the side which beat Romania in a World Cup qualifier last weekend.

The Lions pair of prop Paul Wallace, who has a sprained ankle, and back row man Eric Miller, who was concussed on Saturday, were ruled out.

They have been replaced by Justin Fitzpatrick and Dion O'Cuinnneagain, who was born in Cape Town and two years ago was playing for Western Province.

The other changes showed the return of Kevin Maggs at centre and Conor McGuinness at scrum-half while the 22-year-old Girvan Dempsey makes his first start in an Ireland jersey on the left wing.

Wood missed Ireland's World Cup win over Georgia 10 days ago because of a contractual dispute with the Irish Rugby Football Union.

That, however, has now been resolved and, after coming on as a half-time replacement against Romania, Wood takes over again in the starting line-up.

"It's great to be back," the Harlequins front row man said. "It's a big match and a big stage and I am delighted to be part of it."

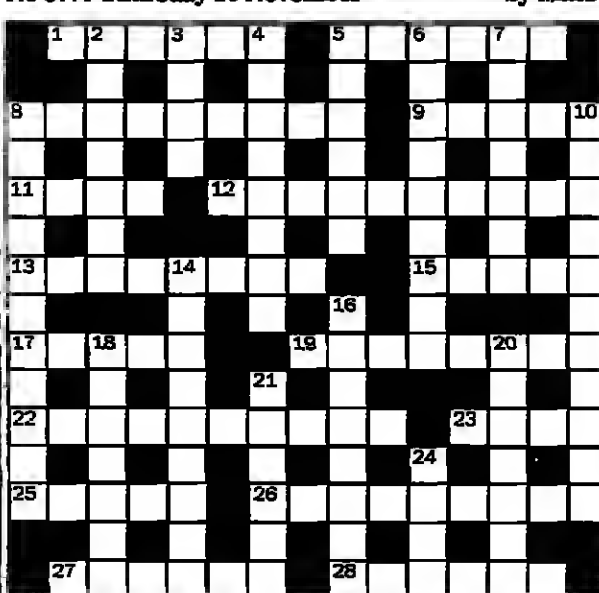
Teams, Digest, page 31

## THE THURSDAY CROSSWORD

No 3778 Thursday 26 November

by Mass

Wednesday's solution



- ACROSS**
- Slow mover's better sacrificing lead (6)
  - Birds about to open mouths (6)
  - This convenience is for the boarder (9)
  - Indicate position of Rook occupying a file (5)
  - Instrument, old fiddle, from what we hear (4)
  - Putting on a feast (10)
  - Perversely austere, mostly concerned with hoard (8)
  - Bird almost like a gull found around Britain (5)
  - Send on the same round (5)
  - Arresting one old fighter engaged in pugilism (8)
  - One with a line in sport? (5-5)
- DOWN**
- This should get one under way (7)
  - European from Portugal engaged in course (4)
  - Repeatedly claim wrongful arrest around southern Spain (8)
  - Paint compound (4,2)
  - Club food with glass containing good wine (9)
  - Highest point of winging

CRICKET REBECCA  
INBUB REBECCA  
THE FOUR FISH  
DINER SQUAD  
EALABY DELETO  
GULLABY DELETO  
H  
ACROBATIC SPARROW  
H  
GOAL KICK ASH  
ENUNULSYN  
LIGHTNINGSTRIKE  
LCAEUECR  
CRICKET NEWS

- Channel swimmer's last crack (4)
- One up in legal clause? (5)
- Gold in odd place in China? (9)
- Mate cooked up without knight (6)
- Top divorcee has issue reported (6)
- lark - i.e. high as a hawk? (7)
- Is he always behind with accounts? (5-6)
- Plant, plant with work unit over in congested city (11)
- Addition to bill for roll stuffed with fish (9)
- Stay that is for undergarments (8)
- Sink builder (7)
- Office of prayer leader-parent's filled it, with energy (7)
- Extract editor questioned (6)
- Soldier among former cadets (4)

## Drug users face life bans and \$1m fines

ATHLETICS  
BY STEPHEN WILSON

ATHLETES FOUND guilty of using steroids could face life bans and fines of up to \$1m (£650,000) under new anti-doping proposals put forward by the International Olympic Committee in London yesterday.

A package of proposed drug sanctions, including a precise definition of doping, has been drawn up by a special IOC panel and will be presented to leaders of 35 international sports federations in Switzerland tomorrow. However, some leading Olympic officials say the proposals are too complicated and confuse the issue rather than solve it.

The IOC wants all federations to endorse a single medical code, embracing uniform drug rules, procedures and sanctions, in advance of the world anti-doping conference in Lausanne in February.

An IOC working group dealing with legal and ethical issues has come up with a proposed definition of doping as the basis for the fight against performance-enhancing drugs.

Doping is defined as one or both of the following:  
■ "use of an expedient substance or method potentially harmful to health and capable of enhancing the athlete's performance";  
■ "the presence in the athlete's body of a substance or evidence of a use of a method where such substance appears (on the IOC's list of banned substances)".

Gunnar Werner, the Swedish secretary of the International swimming federation, Fina,

and a member of the IOC panel, said the proposal divides doping offences into two categories - "regular" and "aggravated" cases.

Werner said the latter were defined as "intentional doping", including attempts to mask or manipulate urine samples or refusal to take a drug test.

The package lists four types of penalties: disqualification from an event, a warning, suspension and fines.

In the so-called regular cases, sanctions for use of stimulants such as ephedrine would be punished by suspensions of one to six months. For more serious offences, the penalty would range from six months to two years.

For aggravated cases, the proposal calls for suspensions of two to eight years. If "intentional doping" with steroids is proven, a life ban is recommended.

The proposal calls for fines of up to \$100,000 (£60,000) for minor drug offences and fines of up to \$1m for serious infractions. Any third parties, such as doctors or coaches involved in supplying drugs to athletes, would also be liable to penalties.

Existing IOC guidelines are much simpler, recommending a maximum two-year suspension for athletes committing a first steroid offence. There is no provision for fines.

Even though Werner was on the IOC panel which drew up

the proposals, he said he thought the measures were flawed. "As a lawyer, I understand the discussions, but it won't be so easy to apply it for those non-lawyers," he said. "This proposal is complicated, maybe a little too complicated."

He questioned the differentiation between doping and "intentional" doping. "How can anybody prove intentions?" he said. "How many cases of doping are not intentional?"

Werner also expressed concern that the proposals put the burden of proof in doping cases on the sports bodies. The federations would have to prove the athletes guilty, rather than the athletes proving their innocence.

"Now I can see every athlete saying, 'This was not my urine, or whatever,'" Werner said. "We would have to prove that it is. It's my opinion that in steroids and more severe drugs like human growth hormone, the burden of proof should be shifted to the athlete."

In New York, the fight against doping received a million dollar boost from the White House. The US drug "czar", Barry McCaffrey, pledged that amount in federal funding for research to purge Olympic sports of all banned substances, from marijuana to anabolic steroids.

McCaffrey also called on the IOC to set up an independent anti-doping office, award medals to athletes cheated by doping and insist that every Olympic sport use and enforce the same drug rules.

## More women are victims of INTESTACY than DIVORCE

A woman, on average, lives longer than a man. So she is more likely to have to face the difficulties of intestacy - the legal term for being left in a mess because her husband didn't make a Will.

Many men assume that, on their death, all they own will automatically go to their wives. This isn't so. When a man dies intestate, not just his wife but brothers, sisters and even cousins may have a claim on what he owned.

His widow may have to sell the house to pay off his relations. None of this need happen if he makes a Will. Yet seven out of ten people fail to take this simple step.

Now, as a service to the public, WWF UK (World Wide Fund For Nature) has produced its own plain language guide to making a Will. It explains:

- why everyone needs to make a Will
  - how to go about it
  - and how to minimise tax liability on what you leave behind.
- Don't leave it to chance. Give yourself the peace of mind of knowing your loved ones are properly provided for.

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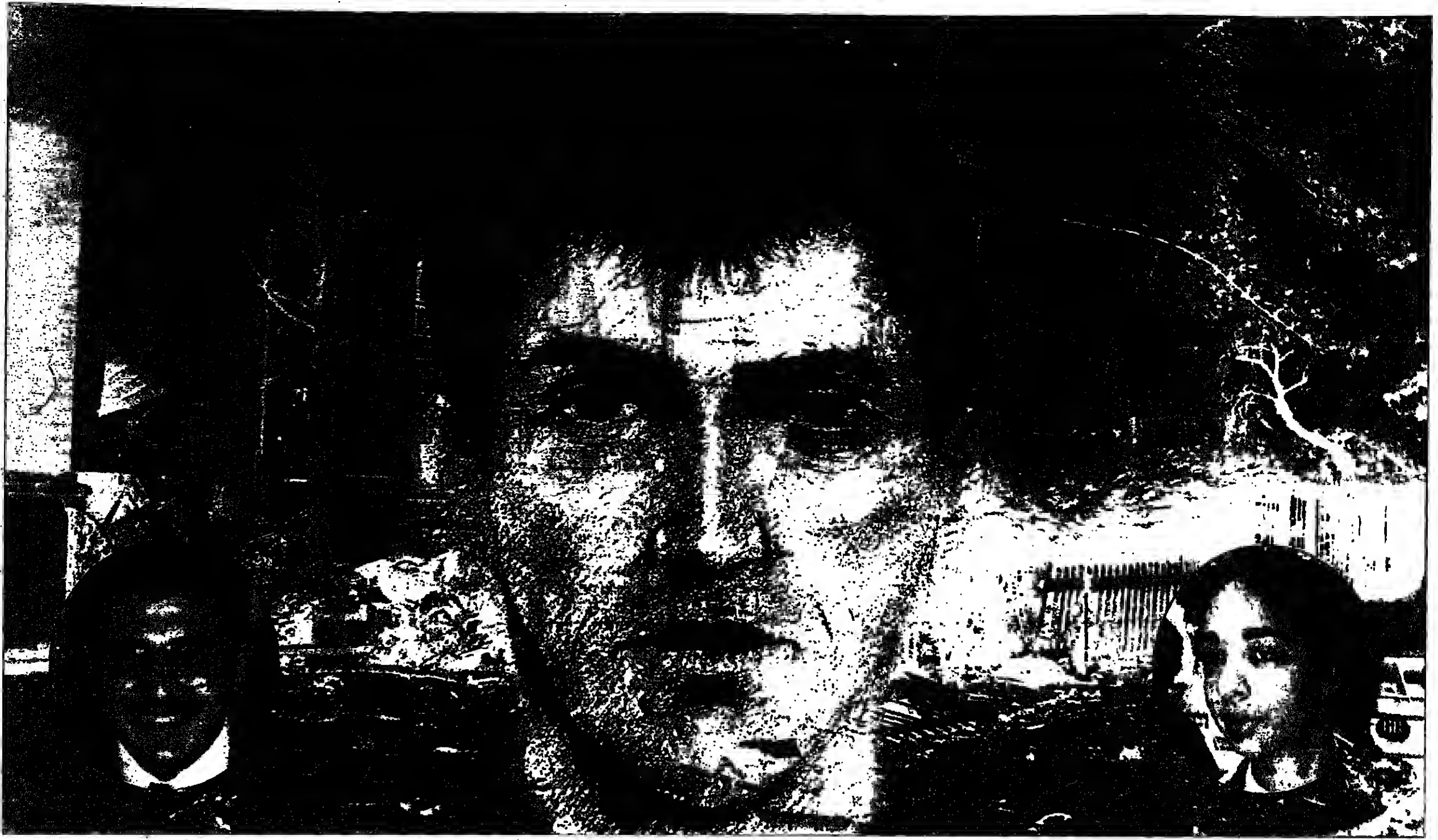
JP 11/10/98

THE INDEPENDENT

26 November 1998

# THURSDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



Jawad Botmi, above left, and Samar Alami, above right, are in prison for the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in London. But was Reda Moghrabi, centre, the man behind the explosion?

## The bomber who never was

This is the face of Reda Moghrabi. Because of him fellow Palestinians Samar Alami and Jawad Botmi are serving 20 years for conspiracy to bomb the Israeli Embassy. Only Moghrabi – now suspected of being an Israeli agent – knows the truth, but apart from their word there is not the slightest evidence that he ever existed. By Robert Fisk

**'yuck'**

**\* Give them what they really want this Christmas**

Inside her tiny room, with its arched brick roof just off the stone corridor of the women's Category 'A' prison in Durham, Samar Alami has already had two years to ponder the extraordinary events that took her from her wealthy Knightsbridge home to share her life with Myra Hindley and Rosemary West. Palestine seems a very long way away – even when Samar Alami hands her visitors a small cup of scalding, Arabic coffee – and the more she tells her story, the more you realise how difficult it must have been for an English jury to believe in her innocence.

On 16 December 1996, Samar Alami and her friend, Jawad Botmi, both proclaiming their innocence, were convicted of conspiring to bomb the Israeli embassy and the headquarters of the Zionist Federation in London in 1994. "The evil pair," one paper called them. When Alami named the man she believed had entrapped them – Reda Moghrabi, whom she now suspected was an Israeli agent – the authorities largely ignored her revelation. Which is perverse, to say the least, because the police admit they never found the actual bomber. And Moghrabi is the name the bomber used.

At 32, Samar Alami is a slight, energetic Lebanese-Palestinian with a BSc in chemical engineering from University College, London, and an MSc from Imperial College; an intelligent, thoughtful, political woman who was a member of various British-Palestinian groups, as well as a supporter. She never concealed this – of the Damascus-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Jawad Botmi is 30, came from Beirut in the occupied West Bank, and holds a BSc in electrical engineering from Leicester University. An attempt to run his own security alarm company had failed by January 1995, and he was reduced to earning pin-money in Britain by acting as a middle-man at car auctions. Frustration at the plight of Palestinian refugees, anger at the unfair nature of the Oslo "peace

accord, and guilt that they had no part in the "resistance" to Israeli rule in the West Bank, brought the two together.

Carefully, Alami tells visitors of her life before the trial: how she had kept two guns in a family apartment in Knightsbridge for a Palestinian friend who feared assassination when he was in London; how she tried to work out the chemistry of bombs which could be improvised for use against Israeli military targets in the occupied territories; how she experimented with Botmi to see if model aircraft could carry explosives over the Lebanese-Israeli border; how she had been photographed at a London synagogue during a visit by Shimon Peres (she said she took an interest in Jewish affairs); and of how she took up Reda Moghrabi's offer of free explosives (for experiments with the model aircraft, she claims) a few days before the Israeli embassy was bombed in 1994.

"I guess I was a bit naïve," she told me just before her trial. "I never felt threatened by Reda Moghrabi. I didn't take nearly enough precautions." And listening to her, I could see how the 12-strong jury would shake their heads in disbelief. She was convicted by a majority of 11 to one, and I wasn't surprised. Gareth Peirce, her solicitor, was not going to score any points when the defence tried to explain to the jury the history of Palestine – even though Peirce brought along a shoal of testimonials for Samar Alami, including one from a former Tory minister, Lord Gilmour.

But the trial was, to put it mildly, a very puzzling affair. Even before it began, the case developed unusually. First of all, the police charged Nadia Zekra, a very middle-class Palestinian lady, with planning the bomb outside the embassy. Explosive traces had supposedly been found on a table in her home. Then, once the trial began, all charges against Zekra were dropped. Another Palestinian, Mahmoud Abu-Wardeh, was charged, but the jury acquitted him on all charges. And in the pre-trial period, the judge allowed both Alami and Botmi to go free on bail – indeed, I first

met both of them when they turned up to a lecture I gave at the Royal Geographical Society in London during their hearing. Why, I asked myself then, would the court allow two supposedly dangerous "terrorists", alleged to have blown up an embassy, to wander the streets of London?

The claim of responsibility for the Israeli embassy bombing was itself very curious. It was sent to two Arab newspapers in London and claimed to be from the "Jaffa team" of the "Palestinian Resistance". No such group has ever been heard of before, or since, and the wording of the Arabic-language document lacked the clarity of nearly all other similar claims. A week earlier, a massive bomb had destroyed the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires – yet the London bombings killed no one, an extraordinary miracle that had most Middle East militants wondering what sort of organisation could have proved so ineffective. Every Palestinian opposition group or Muslim organisation in Lebanon opposed to the so-called "peace process" has either denied to *The Independent* any role in the explosions, or expressed ignorance of it.

Then came the trial itself. Gareth Peirce, Alami's solicitor – the lady who broke the prosecution's case in the Guildford Four trial – agrees that the judge, Mr Justice Garland, generally behaved with great fairness towards her client. But there were some unhappy prosecution slips in the trial. A drawing of London streets allegedly showing the location of the Israeli embassy – target of the July 1994 bombers – was proved to be a street map of Sidon where one of Alami's relatives lived. There was confusion about an aerial found in Mr Abu-Wardeh's possession which was originally said to be part of Botmi's aircraft project, but was in fact part of a security alarm.

Then two members of the jury complained to Mr Justice Garland that a reporter in the court had tried to contact them during the trial proceedings. One of the jurors stated that the reporter "said words to the effect: 'I've got a telephone'".

Continued on page 8

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**yack**

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk  
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity

## Peers and pageantry

Sir: If it is broke (as in the Millennium bug, and Dome), then fix it; if it ain't broke, just ugly, then go fix something more important.

In the Queen's speech, we see major reforms to transport policy and food standards postponed, in order to abolish hereditary peers. Moreover, the P G Wodehouse lot are to be replaced with assorted recycled Strathclyde regional councillors, backroom apparatchiks and, no doubt in the fullness of Tory time, PR sleazes and fat cats.

Some years ago, I was invited to dinner in the Canadian Senate (which is entirely made up of such political rethorics). They bewailed their lack of legitimacy and pointed to the example of the much more popular Lords (then taking on Mrs Thatcher).

Lords are not in the habit of submitting to party discipline, and if "the Care of the Pig" comes up for debate, there will be a peer who knows, though party hacks think pork is born in plastic wraps in Tesco's. And the Lords' scientific knowledge far outweighs that of the Commons. Transport and food policy are both science issues. The choice of two science-based reforms as sacrificial victims of the move to abolish hereditary peers is symbolic. We already have a Commons full of party faithful: by all means get rid of ancient hereditary Lords, but not to replace them with party-line yes-people.

EUAN G NISBET  
Englefield Green,  
Surrey

Sir: If the Government is sincere about bringing in stage two of Lords reform within the next couple of years, perhaps it could reassure doubters by time-limiting the current proposed legislation, so that if it is not replaced by full Lords reform within, say, three years, the Act lapses and hereditary peers can resume their places.

PAUL JOHNSON  
Bristol

Sir: I have been listening, with great interest to discussions in Parliament about the Government's plans to get hereditary peers "off benefit and into work".

I have been most impressed to hear from Mr Hague and others about the tremendous job these people have done over many years of service to the nation. It must be a great blessing to us all that they will now be given the vote in parliamentary elections and, indeed, the right to stand for election. If the people are opposed to the Government and eager to retain the services of our hereditary peers within the national legislature, it will be very easy for them to take their rightful places, for there can be no doubt that they will sweep the board at the next general election.

Quite a lot of them live in the same constituency as me so I await their election addresses with joyous anticipation.  
PETER GRESHAM  
London W14

Sir: Your leader arguing for the removal of the Monarch from the State Opening of Parliament ("Modern democracy does not need this royal performance", 24 November), misses the point of the ceremony and fails to recognise the value of drama and pageantry. The monarch is Head of State and, as such, speaks for the people. The particular value of the unelected monarch as opposed to an elected president, is that he or she can be said to speak for the entire population, whilst the elected person is tarnished by the fact that many people will have voted against them or not voted at all. This is very much the reason why the Prime Minister should not present the proposed legislation, as the monarch doing so implies that it is the will of the nation and not just of the party, thus reinforcing the fact that the



Hong Kong in the Rain No 4: Bridesmaids struggle with a train outside a register office in Kowloon

Edward Webb

opposing parties will accept peacefully the will of the majority.

The value of the pageantry is to bring this to the attention of the widest possible audience. You are naive if you imagine that as many people would pay attention to the event or the legislation if it were presented by the politicians alone. The repeated attempts to replace the monarchy with a drab system such as exists in other countries, all in the name of democracy, do a great disservice to the nation and its sense of identity. We have a unique and curious institution which has great value and your arguments to reduce and thus eventually abolish it are misguided.

ANTHONY D WOOD  
Liskeard,  
Cornwall

Sir: The answer to the questions posed by your leading article, "Modern democracy does not need this royal performance", is simple. Sell the crown jewels to the Americans and build several hospitals. Open the palaces to the homeless. Get Wills and Harry places on YTS schemes.

Will anybody who thinks that that is silly, in terms of costs and benefits, please tell me why?  
G CUTLER  
Bishops Cleeve, Hertfordshire

Sir: What other business would tolerate several hundred executives – most with other jobs on the side – recalling themselves after a two-month summer recess, all squabbling over voting rights and with a chairman arriving in a gold carriage to deliver the business plan – all with only four weeks to go before the next Christmas recess?

As well as removing the voting rights of board members, let's have a shareholders' EGM to call for performance indicators, a downsizing of the workforce, and a review of the plans to open subsidiary branches in Wales and Scotland.  
BEN JAMES  
Southampton

## Doctor of death

Sir: Dr Kevorkian is back in the headlines again, now flaunting his dealing in death on American television ("Mercy killer" puts man to death on TV", 24 November). But we must exercise the greatest caution. If it were to be ruled legal that a person's life could be defined as not worth living, then the question would inevitably follow: Who is best qualified to make such an assessment?

Perhaps not the ill patient, who may be depressed or confused. Perhaps not their family members – they might be too upset to approach the issue objectively. Will the onus then fall on the medical profession to pass the sentence as well as carry out the deed, to act as judge as well as executioner?

This is not far-fetched. More than 10,000 people in Holland now carry anti-euthanasia "passports" out of fear of being killed by doctors if they fall seriously ill. And their fears are well founded, for a

survey of Dutch doctors has revealed that 23 per cent have ended patients' lives without their explicit request.

Now, as the whole concept of "managed care" takes hold in the NHS, the spectre looms of guidelines and protocols setting out whose life it may be cost-effective to preserve. Put bluntly, the most economic management decision for the elderly sick requiring long-term care is to bring life to a speedy end – "managed death". And the idea of the state which looks after you "from cradle to grave" takes on a whole new meaning.  
HUGH J THOMSON  
Consultant Surgeon  
Birmingham

## Dirty money

Sir: While the Law Society takes the problem of money laundering very seriously, the reality is far less dramatic and more complex than the picture painted in your front-

page story. "City law firms investigated over drug cartel money laundering", (23 November).

Importantly, my information is that the solicitors being investigated are not working in the larger and most well-known City law firms.

Money launderers do not act like supporting characters in a Hollywood gangster movie. A money launderer will, in most cases, appear to be a legitimate businessman who wants to conduct an unremarkable business transaction. They do not appear with suitcases full of used £10 notes. The bulk of money laundering is carried out through banks and financial institutions. However, in a small proportion of cases, solicitors and other professionals will be targeted by these criminals.

The challenge for solicitors is how to spot a suspect transaction. Also, solicitors face the difficult choice of when they should breach

the duty of client confidentiality and report a case of suspected money laundering to the police. They can only do so in cases of real suspicion.

The Law Society, City firms and the profession as a whole will continue in their efforts to eradicate money laundering. We will also continue to help the National Criminal Intelligence Service in its work in this difficult area of law enforcement.  
MICHAEL MATHEWS  
Law Society President  
London WC2

## Babies in prison

Sir: On page 2 (24 November), you quote a Prison Service spokesman saying that mothers in prison were under no illusions that if they were involved in violent incidents their babies would be removed. Four pages later, you quote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state". Not, it seems, in British prisons.

In almost every other stratum of society it is now recognised that the only grounds for removing a child from its mother is when the mother poses a danger to the child from which it cannot be sheltered by outside supervision. Yet the prison service is using the removal of very young babies as an instrument of punishment for their mothers.

Recently delivered mothers in ideal environments are under a great deal of stress. Those who are in prison must be under even more stress and it is understandable that tempers flare. However, the solution must be to separate the women involved in these incidents from each other – not from their babies. By choosing the latter course, we as a society must be causing untold suffering to both the mother and, which should concern us even more, to the babies themselves.  
VICKI PORTMAN  
Cheshire Hulme, Cheshire

## Lessons of Camelot

Sir: In the year 2001 let's not hand over our National Lottery to Mr Branson. Notwithstanding his offer to run it sans profit, he ought to have enough on his hands looking after his far-from-clockwork railway. Nor should we involve any other entrepreneur or plc. The lessons of Camelot (admittedly with a pussyfoot OFLOT) have surely been learned.

The people's lottery would be best run by the people and for the people. Let efficient National Savings take charge. Premium Bonds and the Lottery would run well in tandem. With the coming National Lottery Commission firmly in charge, Britain could have fund-raising free from greed.

At the same time, top prizes should be reduced to £1m so that many more punters won the lesser amounts. The mid-week draw has lost its charm and should go. If there is any televising of results, it should be by way of a five-minute news slot on all channels without fee or favour.  
JIM BRUNTON  
Edinburgh

## A case to act on

Sir: Contrary to your report "Steep rise in sex abuse of patients" (21 November), the British Psychological Society did remove Dr Peter Slade from the Register of Chartered Psychologists.

The rationale of our disciplinary committee for allowing Dr Slade to remain in membership of the society, as opposed to remaining on our register, was so that we might have some control over his future behaviour. This case highlights the necessity for statutory control of psychologists, something the British Psychological Society has been campaigning for since the early 1990s.

Our latest communications with government indicate that whilst the case in favour of statutory control is made, they are not prepared to find government time to put the legislation on the floor of the House. Perhaps this case will persuade the government to act.  
Dr INGRID LUNT  
President  
British Psychological Society  
Leicester

## Men as scapegoats

Sir: So, premature spinsterhood afflicts women east of Berlin too, does it? ("Bridget Jones goes to Budapest", 24 November). Having Adam LeBor relay the news doesn't make the analysis any less facile. Once again, men are the problem sex, their fragile egos threatened by independent-minded women. But at least it diverts Bridget's attention from her own inadequacies.

Far from resenting high-earning women, most men are only too happy to be relieved of the breadwinner's burden. The problem is female sexuality, which remains fixated with power. To preserve differentials, Bridget demands an incremental increase from her partner. Nor has she developed the protective instinct that once drove men to share their wealth with their partners.

The best therapy for Bridget Jones is to confront her own need to change. Using men as scapegoats solves nothing.  
ANDREW SCHOFIELD  
Cambridge

## Easy target

Sir: Could someone please tell me where I can acquire one of those cardboard cut-outs of M Thatcher (Review, 24 November)?

We have a 25-year air rifle shoot (it would be too formal to call it a range) in my back garden, backed by a substantial wall.

It occurred to me that the figure would make a welcome change from the rather boring circular targets we normally use, and might at the same time give at least some of the marksmen something of a sense of purpose.  
ARTHUR FEMBERTON  
Newport Pagnell,  
Buckinghamshire

## IN BRIEF

virtue-looking man and ask sweetly for his seat. I always got a seat. A worse problem lies in the future when you must contend with thousands of stairs in the Underground with a pushchair. Public transportation in London, including buses, is a nightmare for mothers. Can we address this?  
KAREN DONOVAN  
London W9

Sir: If Marsham Towers and the Faraday Building are fit for destruction (letter, 23 November), so too surely is the former Department of Education office building which flanks Waterloo station along York Road. This Sixties eyesore obscures from view what is arguably the most beautiful and adventurous

modern building in Britain, the Eurostar terminus. Its demolition and replacement by a garden square would wonderfully enhance the whole South Bank. Anyone for a Millennium Dynamite Fund?  
DAVID HARGREAVES  
London SW11

Sir: The Queen's Speech represents no less than the third time headlines have been milked out of Jack Straw's promise to end the right of rape defendants to cross-examine the complainant, a measure that will only affect a handful of cases every year. Let's have some serious action from the Government to increase the conviction rate in rape, not simply lip-service.  
JULIE BINDEL  
Assistant Director  
Research Centre on Violence,  
Abuse and Gender Relations  
Leeds Metropolitan University

## Choice gems from the treasury of the wisdom of Albania

TODAY I am bringing you some of my favourite Albanian proverbs. Albanian proverbs, if you didn't know, are very different from our proverbs. Our proverbs are terse and practical, like "Don't count your chickens till they're hatched" or "Many hands make light work". Albanian proverbs are more poetic and linger in the mind longer, even though they seem to have no practical use at all in real life. Anyway, see for yourself with this new selection...

Celibacy used to be a way of life. Nowadays, it's just something to try after you've tried everything else.

Three things to avoid: a man wearing a suit, a woman wearing sun-

glasses in her hair and a dog wearing a muzzle.

The first Christmas card always comes from someone you weren't going to send a card to.

There is nothing quite so sad or so useless as a completed crossword puzzle.

Abdication is a one-way ticket. There is no word meaning the opposite of "abdicate".

The man who thinks that the answer to the problem of not having enough time for breakfast is to have breakfast before he goes to

bed the night before has got more problems than he thinks he has got.

When you wash your hands in someone else's kitchen, you always dry your hands on the wrong thing.

When you hear a princess preaching against land mines, remember that until quite recently her forebears were happily setting man-traps on their own land.

What do crowds of actors murmur in countries where rhubarb is unknown?

Three people to avoid: a man hold-



**MILES KINGTON**  
The first Christmas card always comes from someone you weren't going to send a card to

ing a clipboard who just wants to ask you a few questions, a hishop in a bad temper and anyone who

claims to remember your mother well.

What makes a town child different from a country child is that he has never seen a cow being milked – and the same is true today of country children.

The 18th century had the right idea about wigs; they tried to make them look as different from real hair as possible.

The most law-abiding and careful motorists are driving stolen cars.

One of the sad things about Alzheimer's Disease is that nobody

can remember who Alzheimer was.

Just before we sell a car, we polish and clean it into a state where, suddenly, we no longer want to sell it.

Has anybody ever cooked the recipe printed on a tea cloth?

To come last in a race is no disgrace, for a horse.

Everyone wants press coverage, but nobody wants press treatment.

A playwright who condemns a character to be killed in the first 10 minutes of a play should remem-

ber that he has also condemned an actor to wait two hours for the curtain call.

The secret of the English is that when they are called Sassenach, or limey, or anything, they never feel belittled.

How did the man who made the first sausage know what it was going to look like?

Fellow passengers' newspapers are always more interesting than fellow passengers' books.

All these proverbs are taken from the Great Big Book of Albanian Proverbs, 1998 edition.



Lessons of Camelot

In the year 2001 let's not hand our National Lottery to Mr. ... Notwithstanding to Mr. ... it seems profit, he ought to ... enough on his hands looking ... his far-from-clockwork ... way. Nor should we involve any ... entrepreneur or plc. The ... of Camelot (admittedly ... a pussyfoot OFLOT) have ... been learned.

The people's lottery would be ... by the people and for the ... Let efficient National ... take charge. Premium ... and the Lottery would run ... in tandem. With the coming ... Lottery Commission ... in charge, Britain could have ... raising free from greed ... the same time, top prizes ... be reduced to £1m so that ... more punters won the lesser ... units. The mid-week draw has ... to charm and should go, if ... in any televising of results, it ... be by way of a five minute ... slot on all channels without ... rigour.

BRUNTON  
burgh

Case to act on

Contrary to your report "Sleep ... a sex abuse of patients" ... (November), the British ... ological Society did remove ... ter Slade from the Register ... artered Psychologists ... e rationale of our disciplinary ... ittee for allowing Dr Slade ... in membership of the ... by, as opposed to remaining ... gister, was so that we might ... some control over his future ... jour. This case highlights the ... sily for statutory control of ... ologists, something the ... h Psychological Society ... en campaigning for since ... y 1990s.

Latest communications with ... ment indicate that whilst ... in favour of statutory ... is made, they are not ... red to find government time ... the legislation on the floor ... use. Perhaps this case will ... the government to act.

SHILD LANT  
lent  
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as scapegoats

premature spinsterhood ... women east of Berlin ... ? (Bridget Jones goes to ... est) 24 November. Having ... LeBon relay the news ... make the analysis any ... (Once again, men are the ... in sex, their fragile egos ... ned by independent ... women. But at least ... Bridget's attention from ... n inadequacies ... from resenting high-car ... , most men are only too ... o be relieved of the ... inner's burden. The ... n is female sexuality which ... s fixated with power. To ... e different minds. Bridget ... is an incremental increase ... r partner. Nor has she ... ed the protective instinct ... e drive men to share their ... with their partners ... est therapy for Bridget ... to control her own need ... e. Using mirrors ... nts, she's nothing ... WASHBURN

target

ld someone please tell me ... can acquire one of those ... nt out ones of 31 Thatcher ... 24 November ... e a 25 year old rifle shoot ... the too formal to call it a ... my back garden, backed ... stential wall ... rved to me that the figure ... ke a welcome change ... rather boring circular ... e normally new, and might ... ne time are at least some ... euphoric something of a ... euphoric.

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The Law Lords have set the path. Let's follow it

AFTER 40 days of confusion and growing concern that the game is lost, the law lords have redeemed the reputation of the ennobled and made a historic decision to keep Pinochet in the UK to face extradition to Spain.

The decision was not unanimous. Two judges voted for release, three against. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, still has the final decision of whether to allow extradition to go ahead. In the days to come, and in the light of the full published judgment, there will no doubt be all sorts of legal arguments over the implications of the decisions.

But in this wondrous, and unexpected, moment, let us be clear on one thing. Lords Nicholls, Steyn and Hoffman have made a judgment of profound importance not just for this country and visiting dictators and criminals, but for the whole course of justice for crimes against humanity.

This was a ruling made under the full glare of world interest and arrived at after only the fullest and uniquely open consideration of the evidence from all interested parties. At the end of the day the highest court in Britain judged that General Pinochet was not protected by his former position as head of state from the full rigours of international law, the accusations of his accusers and the cries of his victims.

For a British Government that stumbled into this extraordinary crisis as much through blundering as design, yesterday's judgment may have come as something of an embarrassment. It would have been so much easier to have bathed in the warm glow of high morality while leaving it to the courts to prevent the practical consequences.

Now Jack Straw has to face the consequences of arresting a visiting dignitary seeking to buy arms and gain medical treatment in this country. It would seem almost inconceivable that he could use his authority to prevent actual extradition to Spain.

This will not be entirely welcome to a Chilean political establishment that has tried to smooth over transition to democracy by allowing Pinochet to continue in public life untried and unapologetic. It will be objected by some legal opinion that sees such a judgment taking this country and others into uncharted waters full of doubtful legal implications. It will certainly be objected to by those who feel that Pinochet's crimes should be ignored because of the fact that he was, in Lady Thatcher's awful phrase, "a good friend to this country".

But the Chilean dictator's crimes cannot be ignored. They are too horrendous and too deliberate for that. It is precisely because he was in charge at the time that Pinochet should be held responsible. In deciding that Pinochet could not be extradited because the crimes alleged were committed when he was head of state, the Appeals Court - the initial judgment of which the House



of Lords has now overruled - was in danger of declaring that Hitler, had he been caught, should not have been tried in Nuremberg while his minions were.

In saying that justice should be left to the Chileans, the government there is in danger of suggesting that Spain has no right to justice for its citizens killed under military rule there, or that Britain should not seek justice for its citizens murdered by Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein or Idi Amin.

Which is precisely the point. Coming on top of the first arrangements at the Bosnian War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague and the agreement earlier this autumn in Rome to establish a permanent tribunal for crimes against humanity, yesterday's judgment by the law lords has immeasurably strengthened the move to hold the world's dictators responsible for their actions.

If dozens of visitors now feel a great deal less secure about visiting Britain, all to the good. They shouldn't feel secure here, or anywhere. Now that Pinochet has been brought to book, could Slobodan Milosevic be next?

The market's rise is tomorrow's trouble

SO IT'S not doom and gloom, but boom and boom after all. The American economy, it seems, has shrugged off fears of recession and is set for "surprising growth" this year. Between July and September, gross domestic product grew by a healthy 3.9 per cent, according to the US government. More strikingly, the US stock market rally has brought the Dow Jones average back up to levels of this summer. Is it time to crack open the bubbly?

What happened to imminent depression? Well, the American public just wouldn't believe in it. Consumers and traders saw that the Federal Reserve Board wouldn't let their financial system collapse once it had rescued the biggest speculators and their hedge fund. A few interest rate cuts followed and public confidence surged back.

But keep the bubbly on ice. Economic growth (and especially the stock market) behaves like a bubble. To avoid a sudden explosion, some way must be found to let the pressure out: but there is no way to prick a bubble slowly. Instead, the best hope is to contain growth. Thus the Fed was not too worried that the recession in Asia and Russia would have "contagious effects" in the US; if it helped to slow growth, then, in that respect, it would be welcome.

But it hasn't. In the short term, that's good news: US growth might help Asia export its way to recovery. But in the longer term, it makes adjustment even harder. For the first time since the 1930s, American families have become net borrowers. The further they get into debt, the bigger the shock when - not if - the bubble finally bursts. Just as Japan failed to deflate its speculative bubble in the 1980s and later ran into deep recession, so failure to ease growth now stores up trouble for the future. The Fed must now try to cap any sense of euphoria; if that means no more cuts in interest rates, or even a rise, then so be it.

Is there nothing so crass that it won't be embraced by television?

LET'S PRETEND, for a moment, that the House of Lords has been abolished, and that we don't have to bother arguing about whether the 4th Baron Blockhead is or is not an adornment to our constitution. To the Earl, who this week lamented that losing the hereditary right to vote on matters affecting the rest of us commoners would be "a wrench to the family," I can only say that he and they will get over it. I know we Aaronovitches have.

If I'm wrong, and the loss is too painful, the Earl may be able to find some comfort in the metaphorical arms of a fellow aristocrat. I'm talking here about Sarah, Duchess of York (or is she no longer officially a duchess, and now merely a demi-coroneted marquise?) who appears regularly on her own Sky show, *Sarah: Surviving Life*. (The colon, I gather, is irrigated.) I am sure that Fergie's producers can schedule a fallen aristocrat to show somewhere: the diminution of status is, after all, the empathic red-head's real area of expertise.

Or is it diminution of integrity? Or absence of shame? And this is my real theme for the day; and this is my real theme for the Queen's Speech, nor the legislative hurdles that lie ahead of Mr Blair and his Quest for the New Albion. For two things that I have read this week have suddenly reminded me of what a strange state our popular culture is in: how odd the national conversation has become; and how bizarre is the behaviour of those who speak the loudest.

The first was an interview with the author of the most recent biography

of Prince Charles, Penny Junor, in which she described how her life had practically been destroyed by hostile reactions to her book. Let us recall that this time claimed, among other things, that Diana had been the first to book away from home, had artfully manipulated Charles into marriage and had subjected Camilla Parker-Bowles to terrifying telephone calls, threatening imminent assassination. Despite all this, Ms Junor had apparently been taken aback by the scale of intrusive press interest in her book, and where her information had come from. Yes indeed, Penny, after the low-key reaction to the death of the Princess of Wales, it must all have been a dreadful shock to you. As must the size of advance you originally received for the book, and the sum paid for its serialisation.



DAVID AARONOVITCH  
Right now dozens of people are beavering away at the base of a pyramid of cheap, vulgar programme-making

turned calls. But even the polite letters of rejection to ideas such as *Who Put Heroin In My Kiddies' Sweets?* suggest a weary familiarity with other similar proposals. In one case the fastidiously polite James Boyle, controller of Radio 4, reassures the entirely fictitious Ms Reed that he does indeed remember her from a past meeting in Bristol. He does not warm, however, to *With Friends Like This...*, a programme in which the main guest is "a celeb who is thought by everyone to be a total pillock."

The same cannot be said for the TV critic of *The Sun*, Garry Bushell, who has already hosted programmes on satellite and terrestrial television. Reed asks him to anchor a new cable show entitled *Topless Gladiators*. "We're looking for a really cool presenter," writes Reed. "That's you

Garry! Vulgar without being irreverent." Garry is interested. As is Mike Hollingsworth, agent for Judge James Pickles, who is "most happy, in principle, to allow his name to go forward."

Must Have, Must Do, is Reed's idea for a Channel 5 style-counselling programme. So she writes off to Tara Palmer-Tompkinson, telling the absurd socialite that, "what we're looking for, yeah, are two or three posh tarts to act as style gurus." Back comes a letter from M+M Management: "Tara's diary is now getting very booked up, but do please get in touch with us and we can see if we're able to work together."

Now it's the turn of the Very Reverend Dr John Moses, the Dean of St Paul's. Three weeks after the death of Diana, Reed invites the Dean to participate in a Christmas Compassion video to be called *Diana, the People's Princess: Let's We Forget*. In addition to a filmed address from the Dean, Reed plans to have Chris de Burgh singing "There's a new star in heaven tonight" followed by reminiscences of Diana. But this is not all. Reed continues: "Let's we forget there were other tragedies during the year, Esther Rantzen and a group of grieving mothers will then recite prayers over footage of catastrophes (pensioners over a cliff, tots force-fed Ecstasy by playground fiends, whatever)." Does the Dean tell Reed politely to get lost? No. "I am agreeable," he replies, "to contributing to the video you are planning... in the way that you suggest."

Pickles, Bushell, Palmer-Tompkinson or their agents could be said to dis-

play a lack of dignity when tempted by small amounts of money and hit parts in preposterous TV programmes. But in an industry where the Duchess of York really does act as a sub-Kilroy, how absurd was it for them to fail for Reed/Donaldson?

Nor is the desire to enhance celebrity at any cost the only lesson to be gleaned from the Heart Felt Letters. In at least two cases major celebrities, who fail to respond in any way to the sub-Groucho Club colloquialisms of Ms Reed, are smoked out by an interesting subterfuge. When Richard Branson and Michael Portillo cannot be contacted, a new director called Winston Obago enters the plot. He makes it clear that Heart Felt Productions is now an all-black company. "They give it up large in support of the brothers!" he tells Portillo, who wishes to participate in *The Day My Whole World Collapsed*. "Get your sorry white arse into gear!" he demands of Branson. Both reply remarkably quickly.

We are now at the very beginning of what has been dubbed the digital revolution. Right now dozens of Jane Reeds are beavering away at the base of a pyramid of voyeuristic, vulgar and cheap programme-making. At the top of the edifice are the big voyeurs, who are not so cheap, but who set some of the standards for the rest. Tara and Penny may not be so very different after all. Do you know, I think I'm becoming a bit of a tart myself? Next week's column will deal with the Government's micro-economic strategy in the era of monetary union. Plus something on pornography.

QUOTE OF THE DAY  
"At last we can have some justice which has been denied for so long."  
Pedro Fuentes, Chilean exile, on the decision to allow the extradition of General Pinochet

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY  
"A letter is an unannounced visit, the postman the agent of rude surprises. One ought to reserve an hour a week for receiving letters and afterwards take a bath."  
Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher



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MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD  
Dr Jack Kevorkian's campaign to legalise euthanasia

IF THERE could have been any doubt as to what Dr Jack Kevorkian is promoting as he "assists" in the deaths of his fellow human beings, it was dispelled Sunday night, Jack Kevorkian is promoting Jack Kevorkian. He has been tried and acquitted three times on charges of assisting suicides. But unless the videotape turns out to be an elaborate hoax, this time he should be charged with murder. Kevorkian claimed on 60 Minutes that if

he were convicted, he would starve himself to death in prison. There would be a perverse justice in that - for surely the state would endeavor to save his life.

Chicago Tribune

THE CBS news program 60 Minutes entered broadcasting's lower world in deciding to air a video that shows the killing of a Michigan man by euthanasia zealot Dr Jack Kevorkian. This road to ratings is paved with disgrace. Lingering depiction of an individual being put to death on television is an act of barbarism. 60 Minutes disgraced news institutions in the same manner that Kevorkian disgraces medicine.

Boston Globe

DR KEVORKIAN'S descent from "assisted suicide" to active euthanasia, illustrates the wisdom of Michigan's voters in rejecting a ballot issue that would have legalized assisted suicide earlier this month. We all want some latitude in determining how we and our loved ones will die. We hope there will be adequate pain management, and many of us hope there will be a minimum of pointless treatment. But do we as a society really want to condone the killing of patients?

Detroit News

THE COST of Kevorkianism can be measured by this story: about a year ago a resident of Oakland County shot and wounded his dog. The Prosecutor was inclined not to prosecute, until a public outcry compelled him to do so. Woodworth was convicted and given a year's probation. A society that cares more about animals than people can't be surprised if it starts treating people like animals.

New York Post



## PANDORA

WHEN PANDORA received a call from someone claiming to be an Islington constituent of Chris Smith MP who had been telephoned and asked to lend his name to a letter-to-the-editor defending Smith, but actually penned by a volunteer member of his staff, it was hard to give this tale any credence. Sure enough, a call to Stewart Godfrey, Smith's constituency agent, brought a swift denial that any such practise was taking place. "I'm the only paid member of staff here and I deny that I made that call or asked anyone else to," said Godfrey. "As far as I'm concerned there's been no criticism of Chris in the local papers for months, even years." Sadly, the same claim is not entirely true about the coverage *Saint Chris* has received from the national press.

IS FOOTBALL manager Harry Redknapp about to leave West Ham to take up the helm at Blackburn Rovers, which Roy Evans departed last week? Pandora hears that Blackburn have offered Redknapp four times his current salary (rumoured to be about £4,000 a week). Although he's loath to leave his current position, he's thinking hard about this glittering incentive. The recent spat between him and West Ham chairman, Peter Storrie, may influence his decision about whether or not to move north. When Redknapp described the West Ham board's sale of Andy Impie as a move "made by people who know nothing about football", Storrie took umbrage. After an emergency board meeting on Monday, Redknapp appeared unrepentant. If he was feeling at all restless before, the Blackburn offer might well prove irresistible. Unfortunately, Redknapp did not return Pandora's phone calls yesterday.

AFTER THE fiasco at the recent Labour Conference, Richard Branson is obviously feeling the mounting pressure to improve his rail services. He's just come up with a novel way to motivate the workers at Aston, in Birmingham, who are building trains for his West Coast line together with Fiat Ferroviaria. He distributed 200 single Virgin Atlantic tickets to the US, but kept the return halves. They will be handed out only if the

trains are completed to deadline. Let's hope none of the Aston workers are thinking of emigrating.

YESTERDAY PANDORA reported on Rupert Steiner's "first break" selling stories about his schoolmates to the tabloids. Lo and behold, another exciting update on Steiner's forthcoming book launch has just arrived in the post, including an invitation to a party on 14 December hosted by John Jay, the *Sunday Times* Business News editor. "This party will be one of the largest gatherings of millionaires and entrepreneurs for some time," a note assures us, and helpfully includes names of those great men who have already promised to attend, including Richard Branson, Bernie Ecclestone, David Sullivan and Peter Stringfellow. Pandora wouldn't miss this one for the world! Of course, in view of young Steiner's talent for flogging stories about his chums to the tabloids, it seems wise to wear a disguise to the bash.

"YOU WOULDN'T sell your own grandmother," runs the charming advertisement from employment firm Robert Half International, next to a picture of a sweet old granny. "But how about a relative stranger?" Sure, why not, you hear yourself saying, as you read on, why not sell a stranger or two? "You're a sharp, successful salesperson, but you've still got ethics." Tons of ethics, now how much will you give me for this lovely little stranger?

AFTER THE New York premiere of the film version of *Little Voice*, stars Michael Caine and Jane Horrocks are both being touted as possible Oscar winners. At the launch party earlier this week, Caine adopted the role of Mr. Modesty, telling one reporter that he'd been absent from films for two years "mostly sitting at home reading scripts and generally being a pain in the neck to Shakira". However, Shakira Caine (pictured), who attended the party with the couple's daughter Natasha, was having none of it. "He wasn't a pain in the neck. He was adorable, like a little boy, out there in the garden. You should have seen him." We'll all be able to see Caine mugging it up with his old chum Sean Connery in the March issue of *Vanity Fair*.

## Spare me from more naked bodies



YASMIN ALIBHAI-BROWN  
*You desire one another so much there is no need for satin night-gowns or purple spiky dildos*

on one of the most natural of human activities.

MARY WHITEHOUSE was right all along. There is far too much blaring, brazen sex on British television. And too much cookery too. There have been at least 20 programmes on these in the last two weeks including *Naked*, *Vice*, *Anatomy of Desire*, *Sex and Shopping*, out to mention cooking with virginal Della and alluring Nigella.

Maybe middle-class white Britons feel an irrepressible need to show their disdainful European cousins that they are not repressed, inadequate or third-rate when it comes to the hucious things of life, but stuffing the channels with sex organs and offal dressed in frilly letuce only reveals a pathetic sense of inferiority. What's more, these programmes are putting me off food and sex.

The first will probably do me no harm, but the second is ruining one of the main delights of my life. The problem with being mercilessly exposed to television "pornography", as Mary describes it, is not that we will all become even more sex mad and have it off with customers at photocopying shops in broad daylight, but that we will simply give up

and sharp stilettos. Most couples who are happy with one another enjoy warm sex because it does not have to be a bloody performance.

You desire one another so much, so regularly that there is no need for satin night-gowns or purple spiky dildos. You can have unwaxed legs (bliss) and smelly feet as you collapse into that old bed at the end of an exhausting day; but for the blessed none of this matters because of the intimacy that time brings. You may no longer thrash about until dawn, but what you have instead is quality sex which comes out of knowing what turns you both on.

Perhaps I am being dangerously presumptuous here. Maybe as my partner watches these programmes he begins to yearn for that which he does not have and cannot have. Television is invading our retreat and manipulating our longings.

What makes us watch these programmes now - incredulity and a certain arrogance - may lead in some unquantifiable way to corrupt what has taken years to build up. And this must happen to some people. Suggestion and validation

provided by the relentless obsessions with unusual sexual acts means the ordinary becomes unacceptable, an affront to our right to be on a sensual rollercoaster.

I am even more troubled by the way the essence of sexuality is killed off by such programmes. D H Lawrence understood this when he condemned pornography as "an attempt to insult sex, to do dirt on it". It does this by making us watch what should be intensely private.

Aphra Benn, the first professional woman writer in this country, said that love ceases to be a pleasure when it ceases to be a secret. I think this is even more true for sex. I love what I do with my loved one in my bed because what happens is unique to us and is inaccessible to anyone else. Even saying this is a kind of betrayal of that principle.

There is of course a need for information. There is no bliss in ignorance - and I speak as somebody who comes from a community where none of our languages have a word for the clitoris - but there is none either when your private parts become public property.

There is something very sexy too about modesty and restraint. I have just re-read John Berger's old, but wonderful book, *Ways of Seeing*, in which he says that a lack of modesty leads to a loss of mystery and shifts attention from the eyes, the mouth, the shoulders - all of which can convey many and complex messages - to the sexual parts "whose formation suggests an utterly compelling but single process".

The *Horse Whisperer* is an unforgettable sexy film because the ferocious desire between the lovers is only seen in their eyes and twitchy hands. Do you remember the perforated sheet in *Midnight's Children*, which a young woman used to show hits of herself to the young doctor treating her "ailments"? Seeing only parts of this woman drove him mad with physical longing.

Believe me, it works. Never strut around showing your arse; cover yourself even in bed and choose the parts you would reveal. And remember to save your sex life by turning off that fifth on the box. It is doing none of us any good.

## The best thing about Europe is that they'll wreck the euro



NIALL FERGUSON  
*The most perniciously idiotic aspect of the Lafontaine agenda is its vulgar Keynesianism*

WHEN FUTURE economic historians come to address the question "Why did the single European currency fail?", the obvious answer may well be "Because the Left was in power in 1999".

It really is lousy timing. Here is a project which has far more appeal to economic liberals than to socialists. It can only hope to succeed if Europe's sclerotic labour market is liberalised. It will almost certainly sweep away the remaining national barriers in the European capital market. Big business leaders, with relatively few exceptions, like the idea, because a single currency makes life much easier for multinational accountants. Every now and then, they write fatuous letters to the *Financial Times* to give it.

And which politicians are going to preside over this capitalist beast? You guessed it: Europe's Social Democrats. And not just them, but also parties that are supposedly to the left of social democracy. In France we have a government that includes a number of Communists. In Italy the prime minister himself is a Communist. In Germany we have a coalition in which key ministries (including the Foreign Office) are held by Greens. And in Britain New Labour simultaneously sides up to the Liberal Democrats on many ways more left wing than Tony Blair on economic issues; and hickers with its own Old Labour rank and file.

Now, of course, the project of European economic and monetary union (EMU) has plenty of socialist fingerprints on it. Jacques Delors was one of the key figures responsible for showing it to the top of the Euro agenda in the Eighties. And the present generation of leftist politicians yields to no one in its readiness to mouth pro-EMU platitudes. But it has become increasingly

clear in the past months that there is a big difference between the Left's vision of EMU and the plan agreed (by mainly right-wing governments) at Maastricht.

According to the treaty (see Title 2, Article G, Title VI, Articles 102a to 109m, plus Protocols 3, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 11), the European Central Bank (ECB) will be completely independent from politicians. Its objective will be price stability (since defined by the ECB at keeping inflation between 0 and 2 per cent). As for member governments, under the Stability Pact that was demanded by the previous German administration, they will have to keep their budgets more or less in balance.

This is very far from being agreeable to such luminaries of the European Left as Oskar Lafontaine, the German Finance Minister and, according to yesterday's *Sun*, "the most dangerous man in Europe" (lucky for David Yelland, come to think of it, that Mr Lafontaine very definitely isn't gay). Nor does it appeal much to Dominique Strauss-Kahn, his French counterpart.

When Europe's socialists got together in Brussels last week, they called on the ECB to aim at reducing unemployment as well as inflation when setting European interest rates. There was also considerable support - though not from Gordon Brown - for Lafontaine's proposal to "harmonise" taxes in Europe. By harmonise, of course, Lafontaine means making everyone else's taxes as high as Germany's. Incidentally, he also favours increasing German corporation taxes, already among Europe's highest.

Now, it is not wholly mad to argue that a consequence of the single currency must be a convergence of tax policies - because, in a completely integrated capital market, it will be even more tempting for investors to seek out the low-tax regions. Gradually, imperceptibly and despite the denials of disingenuous Europhiles, the European Union is evolving into a federal state; and one of the characteristics of federal states is that they tend to end up with relatively modest variations in state taxes (though seldom complete uniformity).

But where Europe's socialists have missed the point is that harmonisation (particularly for corporation tax) needs to be downward, not upward; otherwise multinational firms will simply relocate outside Euroland altogether.

Probably the most perniciously idiotic aspect of the Lafontaine agenda is its vulgar Keynesianism. The reason for Continental Europe's shockingly high unemployment rate, we are told, is that European workers are not paid enough. If they had more cash they would buy more goods, and more jobs would magically be created.

Who taught these people economics? Could it be more glaringly obvious that such a policy would

siphon off money from investment, thus increasing the level of unemployment? As they say in the States: like, duh.

But there is something about all this that I really love; and that is the Left's desire to get rid of the rules about balanced budgets. This is an old, old story. After all, what are socialist governments for if not to increase public spending, and when do they ever get round to raising tax by as much? Even Mr Brown, certainly the most fiscally conservative of Europe's finance ministers, has been at it, bumping up spending in the upswing, apparently forgetting that it will go up by itself in the next downswing. No, you can bet your bottom euro: not one of these governments will run a balanced budget in 1999-2000, and the year after will be worse.

Why is this good? It is good because it is the most probable reason why EMU will fail. For if the European governments do run deficits at the same time as the ECB pursues what will inevitably be a pretty tough monetary policy (below 2 per cent inflation is a tall order for most EMU members), two things will happen. First, the euro will appreciate against other currencies - it may well do that anyway as, on paper, it has all the hallmarks of an international reserve currency. Second, as a direct consequence, unemployment in Europe will go even higher.

Small wonder Lafontaine has also been suggesting some kind of exchange rate targeting system, to keep the euro, the dollar and the yen in synch. Predictably, the Americans do not want to know about this; even if it was in their interests, it would be very hard to make such an arrangement work. Exchange rate targets, after all, are also targets for speculators.



The *Sun*'s page three, showing its page one in German

The single currency will soon be a reality. Huge efforts will be made to convince us that it is working just fine. For a year or so, Eurosceptics will have to grind their teeth, their arguments apparently discredited. This will be very uncomfortable for Mr Hague, but also good for him - because the smoother the first year of EMU, the more likely our weathercock prime minister is to join it. And (if the past is anything to go by) Britain will probably join at the worst moment: the moment when a global economic downturn combines with Europe's fiscal and monetary policy mismatch to plunge Europe into recession.

What a sublime irony we are left with: that the only sort of government that could make EMU work would be a Thatcherite one - in all 11 countries.

Niall Ferguson's *The World's Banker: A History of the House of Rothschild* has just been published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

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## Risks of living with hyper-mobility



## PODIUM

JOHN ADAMS  
*From an inaugural lecture on risk management by the professor of geography at London University*

MY PROFESSION for a long time now has had two main preoccupations - transport and risk - and tonight I will attempt to make some connections between them.

Transport comes first. The forecasts of traffic growth are mind-boggling. In 1950, the average Briton travelled about five miles a day. It is now about 27 miles a day, and forecast to rise by 2025 to over 60 miles a day. The recent Transport White Paper proclaimed policy to reduce the rate of growth.

Put another way, given present problems of congestion, pollution and declining public transport, the new policy aspires, it seems to me, to ensure that things will get worse more slowly. Most of the time, money and effort currently being spent on transport are devoted to the development of the pollution-free perpetual motion engine - or as close to it as the laws of physics and chemistry permit. Let us be optimistic and assume that science and technology will succeed in this goal - let us assume that engines become hugely cleaner and more efficient. What is likely to happen

if the realisation of these forecasts is assisted by technological developments that make flying and driving cleaner, but also cheaper? Certain problems, it seems to me, will remain.

More polarisation - as some become more mobile, the majority are being left in the dust. In 1950 there were about 2.5 billion people in the world who did not own cars. Now there are more than 5 billion. More sprawl - the Government's car ownership forecasts cannot materialise unless more people move to the suburbs. The on-street car park in most cities is already full. More anonymity - in high mobility societies fewer people know their geographical neighbours, there is a limit to the number of people you can know, and if you know more at a distance you will know fewer closer to home.

Less child-friendliness - as the world fills with more strangers and more traffic, restrictions on children's freedom will increase. In 1971, 80 per cent of seven- and eight-year-old children got to school on their own, unaccompanied by an adult. Now it is closer to

zero. The two main reasons that parents give for denying their children the freedom that they enjoyed as children are fear of traffic and fear of strangers.

More danger - for those not in cars. Fatter and less fit people - with less exercise built into daily routines.

And less democracy - as the majority have less influence over, and diminished trust in

the institutions that govern their lives. I conclude with a rather gloomy speculation. I think we are heading into trouble. As I suggested near the beginning of this lecture, increased mobility - hyper-mobility - is undermining our trust in the institutions that govern our lives. It is doing this by expanding the scale of the problems that must be confronted.

Environmental problems, economic problems, political problems, and military problems are all being transformed by the process known as globalisation. Science and technology have produced undoubted benefits, but they are also creating risks on an unprecedented scale. If the scale of institutions does not expand in step with the scale of the problems that they are responsible for governing, these institutions will become impotent.

But this growth of scale diminishes the significance of the individual - sociologists refer to this process of social fragmentation as individualism. A friend of mine will be standing in the forthcoming elections for the European

Parliament. His constituency extends from Carlisle to Liverpool and contains over 4 million voters. I find it difficult to imagine that his constituents will feel their individual votes to be of great significance.

As hyper-mobility increases the scale of government, it diminishes the significance of the local. It diminishes the interest of the voter. It generates apathy, which is a relative of fatalism.

A few years ago I received an invitation - to speak to a conference of science fiction writers about transport planning. I asserted - to those more familiar with the literature than I, and hoping to be contradicted - that nowhere in the genre of science fiction dedicated to speculating about futures in which distance had been conquered by science and technology could one find a plausible example of a working democracy.

I was not contradicted. The form of government in all such futures - from *Brave New World* and *1984* to *Star Wars* and *Blade Runner* - is tyrannical hierarchy.







# Sir Kenneth Oxford

SIR KENNETH Oxford's 42-year police career in three of Britain's major forces was saturated in controversy. Although he was an investigating officer in two of the Sixties' most notorious cases, the Profumo Affair and the Hanratty murder inquiry, it was the battles over police accountability during the last decade of his career that he will be best remembered for.

Born in Lambeth in 1924, Oxford spent five years in the RAF during and after the Second World War before joining the Metropolitan Police in 1947. He was CID through and through, a committed career detective – and was involved at a relatively junior level in the Profumo and Hanratty investigations. He rose quickly through the ranks, attended the Senior Command Course at Bramshill, and in 1969 joined the Northumbria Police as Assistant Chief Constable (Crime).

The Met's detective branch had recently been tainted by a number of high profile corruption cases, which meant that all Met officers were viewed with a certain suspicion; and Oxford, very much a Londoner, must have found a move to the provinces difficult. An abrasive and forthright man, he clashed with Her Majesty's Inspector for Northumbria, yet succeeded in becoming the Deputy Chair of the Association of Chief Officers (ACPO) crime committee.

His forthright manner endeared him to the Merseyside Police Committee when he was interviewed for the post of Deputy Chief Constable in 1974, before being designated Chief Constable the following year. His early years in Merseyside gave few hints of the storm that was to follow.

Oxford had a clear commitment to improving facilities and restructuring the force, and its communication system. He received the congratulations of the Merseyside Community Relations Council for scrapping the "Task Force", which he felt had been responsible for some heavy-handed tactics, and expanded beat policing at the expense of motorised patrols as a means of improving police/public relations.

However he vehemently resented any demand from the Police Committee to justify his actions. For instance, when he made a case for an increase in manpower, and the financial consequences were pointed out to him, he took it as a personal attack. Later, any criticism by elected councillors or their appointees of him or his force was interpreted as a political assault upon the police service.

By the late 1970s the relationship between the police and the denizens of the working-class community of Ruyton had plummeted, and a series of violent incidents culminated in the death of Jimmy Kelly in June 1979. Kelly, who had been arrested for being drunk and disorderly, died in police custody, and witnesses came forward claiming that they had seen police assaulting him. Allegations of police violence in K division, which had been ceded to Merseyside from the Lancashire Constabulary in the reorganisation of 1974, followed, and the local MP Sir Harold Wilson, called for a public inquiry.

Kenneth Oxford responded to the wave of critical pressure that followed with a staunch refusal to discuss the case that enraged working-class Merseyside and its democratically elected representatives, including both Tory and Labour groups of Merseyside Council. The most vociferous of these critics was Margaret Simey, who led the Labour Group on the Police Committee.

Simey pushed hard for an inquiry, and Oxford responded in his annual report by referring to "vituperative, misinformed comment made by members of the County Council, but more unfortunately by members of the Police Committee". A *Panorama* television programme inspired a similar defence, the results of an internal investigation of K Division were not put into the public domain, and nine months

after Jimmy Kelly's death three pathologists gave a verdict of death by misadventure, and the Home Office rejected demands for a public inquiry.

The unresolved dispute concerning Kelly's death set the tone for what was to follow as Oxford continued to rail against anyone who questioned his attempts to improve the force's efficiency, largely through expanding its manpower. By the time urban rioting swept Britain in the summer of 1981, enlightened members of the Police Committee had been warning Oxford for several years about the situation in some of its poorest areas. However he continued to accuse the Police Authority of "criminal negligence", despite massively improved command and control facilities, huge capital expenditure and most tellingly the highest police to population ratio outside of London.

Police relations with the largely black population of Liverpool 8 were appalling, and the three days of rioting in Toxteth that July took a dreadful toll in damaged property and police casualties. One policeman was speared in the head with a six-foot railing, a police vehicle killed an innocent disabled man (two officers were later acquitted of manslaughter), and another man was severely injured when a police Land Rover was driven into a crowd. Oxford's response was chilling: "They can see the vehicles coming and they know what will happen if they get in the way." Eventually CS

gas was used for the first time on the British mainland, and due to the use of inappropriate canisters designed to penetrate buildings for use in armed sieges, several serious injuries resulted.

The Chief Constable responded to his critics and to Margaret Simey in particular with both incredulity and anger, and his lengthy report did little to appease anyone. He blamed the riot on "black hooligans", and claimed to have saved the city centre from their ravages, and made several highly personal comments regarding his attitude to the rioters claiming at one point that "they won't beat me". Yet he refused to justify his tactics which many members of the Police Committee felt were unwise, particularly in view of the casualties that the rioters inflicted on the police.

Oxford resisted every step of the way what he saw as political interference in operational policing, and in the respite provided by the *Scamman Report* repeated his long-held belief that Liverpool's violent and multi-racial culture required a very particular policing style. Public demonstrations against Oxford followed.

During this period a peculiar deal was struck between Margaret Simey and the Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, which involved a touting-down of criticisms of Oxford's riot tactics in exchange for his removal as Chief Constable. ACPO and the Police Federation made sure that Whitelaw did not acqui-

esce to the desires of Simey and the Police Committee. After this incident Simey's influence upon Merseyside politics was significantly reduced.

Oxford became the focal point for a debate over police accountability that raged through the 1980s and remains unresolved to this day. As Chairman of ACPO 1982/83, he retained both the national spotlight and the antipathy of the Police Committee. Critics of the police and in particular opponents of his version of democratic accountability were branded as extremists.

The Miners strike of 1984/85 saw the Merseyside Police Committee unsuccessfully attempt to impose an injunction upon their Chief Constable to prevent Merseyside officers providing mutual aid to other forces as the tripartite system of controlling constabularies was all but demolished.

Kenneth Oxford had won. He opposed the Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984, and was named by Alison Halford as practising "tactics of exclusion" during her fight to gain promotion within the Merseyside Police.

He was a believer in traditional roles and traditional disciplines, an anathema to many contemporary management cops, but in some cases somewhat easier to comprehend. As he said of himself in 1981: "If I am arrogant then the spice of arrogance is a necessary constituent of command".

*'If I am arrogant then the spice of arrogance is a necessary constituent of command'*



A demonstration against Oxford (centre) after the Toxteth riots of 1981, when he authorised the first use of CS gas in Britain

scarcities that the rioters inflicted on the police.

Oxford was appointed CBE in 1981, and knighted in 1988. He retired the following year, and devoted the remainder of his life to his charity work and to his family. His managerial style was feudal. He was an old style Chief Constable from a humble background, tough and shrewd, the most passionate advocate of the Chief Officers operational independence.

DICK HOBBS

Kenneth Gordon Oxford, police officer: born London 25 June 1924; officer, Metropolitan Police 1947-69; Assistant Chief Constable (Crime), Northumbria Constabulary 1969-74; Deputy Chief Constable, Merseyside Police 1974-75; Chief Constable, 1976-89; CBE 1981; Kt 1988; married 1954 Mariel Panton; died Liverpool 23 November 1998.

## Violet Owen

VIOLET OWEN was one of the great stalwarts of lawn tennis and women's hockey.

She was born Violet Chamberlain in 1902, in the village of Ramsbury, Wiltshire, and learnt to play tennis on the court which divided her home from that of the young L.G. Owen, who later, in 1930, became her husband.

Tennis was her great love from almost the moment that she could hold a racket. It led to her becoming a sports teacher, after attending Bedford College of Physical Training.

In 1928 she led the British women's hockey team on a tour of Canada and America, and she went on to become one of the greatest enthusiasts in the tennis world, with an enviable playing record, although she never achieved the greatest achievement of a Wimbledon title.

Throughout the 1920s and into the mid-1930s, however, she enjoyed plenty of success, playing at Wimbledon every year from 1926 to 1933 and reaching No 8 in the British rankings.

Her best result was in winning

the women's doubles at the British Hard Court Championships in 1927.

In those days the women's game took a back seat to the men's. Play was in a more subdued style, and was mainly from the baseline. Owen had a challenging approach compared with most women.

She played an all-round game and, although she lacked the power of modern players, this made her more effective at the net. A solid backhand enabled her to retrieve the unexpected. She was skilled at reading her opponent's game of her opponent and anticipating the return.

Above all, her coolness in the battle was her greatest strength. Unlike many of today's players she had a cool calculating temperament and refused to be rattled. She partnered many of the great players of her era and her close friend and frequent partner was Henry Billington, the Davis Cup player and grandfather of Britain's current No 1, Tim Henman.

After retiring in the 1930s as a player, Violet Owen took up coaching to pass her knowledge and skills on to others. She would take play-

ers of under 10 years old and help them through to county level. Even if they proved unable to reach the higher levels, she would still encourage them, pointing out that there is a lot of fun to be gained from playing tennis. This is the work for which she will probably be best remembered.

Violet Owen and her husband lived in Ramsbury all their lives; she served on the parish council and took an enthusiastic part in the life of the community. They had three children to carry on their sporting enthusiasms, John, Geoffrey and Ann. Ann and Geoffrey were both Wimbledon players, and Geoffrey also went on to become the Editor of the *Financial Times* and was knighted in 1989. That grass court in Ramsbury where it all started has now been relaid by him.

BILL EDWARDS

Violet Chamberlain, tennis and hockey player: born Ramsbury, Wiltshire 15 February 1902; married 1930 L.G. Owen (died 1947; two sons, one daughter); died Ramsbury, Wiltshire 22 October 1998.



Owen played at Wimbledon every year from 1926 to 1933

## Professor J. C. Pugh

J.C. PUGH will be remembered with affection by many students and teachers in both the UK and Nigeria.

He came to London University in 1956 as Reader in Geography at King's College, a job which demanded much of him – departmental and college administrative duties as well as teaching. His initial appointment was to impart his knowledge of Africa, and of its fascinating landscape, gained over 14 years in Nigeria, to successive London geography students, but he also taught practical skills in map-making in the field. His attention to detail and a remarkable memory, together with a dry sense of humour and a fund of anecdotes will be recalled by many.

In 1964 he was made a Professor and in 1966 was appointed Head of Department. Despite his responsibilities he took considerable care to interview as many of the applicants for admission to the department as possible so that right from the start he got to know them, and they him.

His textbook *Surveying for Field Scientists* (1975) will have been familiar to King's College Geography students of that era, who will have special regard for the much-mapped Sussex heath near the Rogate field centre. Pugh served on a number of college boards and committees, as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and was elected a Fellow of King's College in 1979. He retired in 1984.

He was born in Bristol in 1919, the only son of Captain George Pugh MC, and attended Bristol Grammar School. He won a scholarship to read Geography at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, which he completed with distinction in 1940.

Initially he joined the Royal Engineers, but in 1941 was transferred

to the Colonial Office and, although expecting to be sent to Hong Kong, found himself diverted to help in the mapping of Nigeria. He enjoyed a great deal of satisfaction from his work with the basic survey framework of Africa – its primary triangulation – which meant considerable spells of field observation in the bush.

Eight years of surveying were followed by seven years as a founder member of the University College of Ibadan in Nigeria in the newly established Geography Department, as Lecturer and then Senior Lecturer as well as Dean of Science.

He was tireless in working for the department and for the students and was one of the co-founders of the Nigerian Geographical Society in 1955. At the same time he completed his doctorate on the Geomorphology of Nigeria, contributed to the theory of landscape evolution in Africa, and wrote textbooks on aspects of African geography. He collaborated with K.M. Buchanan in the book *Land and People in Nigeria* (1955) and a major work, *West Africa*, with W.B. Morgan, was published in 1969.

After retirement he had time to take up some local interests – the Tunbridge Wells Geographical Association, Conservative Association and other societies; he was much involved with the fund-raising work of the local Red Cross, and attended SSAFA meetings (his funeral service was led by their Chaplain, Air Vice Marshal the Reverend S.M. Davidson). Retirement also meant a little more time to enjoy music – he had played the piano and sung in earlier days – and visits to Glyndebourne.

John Pugh founded two prizes – one, in memory of his father, in the Physics Department at Bristol and another in the Geography Department at King's College. Both were designed as much for encouragement as for reward – not so much for the high-flyers but for those who showed application and special interest and enthusiasm. It was therefore typical that he had requested that contributions in his memory should be made to the King's Geography Department Fund.

G.R. PETER LAWRENCE

John Charles Pugh: born Bristol 9 January 1919; Reader in Geography, King's College London 1956-64; Professor 1964-84 (Emeritus); married 1944 (one son); died Tunbridge Wells, Kent 31 October 1998.

## Stu Ungar

STU UNGAR, three times World Poker Champion in Las Vegas, was regarded as the best no-limit player on the professional circuit. He was found dead last Sunday in a motel room on the Las Vegas Strip, with \$800 in his pocket.

Ungar dominated the poker scene in Las Vegas by the force and brilliance of his betting and an intuitive talent for reading his opponents. He won the World Championship, held at Binion's Horseshoe casino, at the age of 26, in 1980, and repeated the feat the following year. After an extended period of ups and downs in his gambling, he returned to win the world title a third time in 1987.

For many years, Ungar had been the victim of his success, in becoming addicted to cocaine. The drug wrecked his health, in the process destroying his nostrils so badly that he took to wearing large round blue-tinted "granny" specs in order to hide his ravaged nose in photographs.

The game of the World Championship is Texas Hold 'em, a faster



form of seven-card stud, which requires judgement, courage and card skills in about equal measure. Ungar had all the talents and had been widely predicted to repeat his back-to-back triumph in the championship in May of this year.

But he was suffering so acutely from his physical collapse that he was unable to leave his hotel room, despite the continued efforts of his

*'Away from the table I'm really not that bad a guy. But when the cards are dealt, I just want to destroy people'*

close supporters to get him on his feet right up to the start of the event. During this time he also suffered delusions that people were out to get him, although, according to the Las Vegas police homicide unit, there was no indication of foul play in his death.

Nicknamed "the Kid" because of his youthful success, Ungar had an ability to dominate the table belied

by his elfin stature. He was relentlessly aggressive and competitive. "Away from the table I'm really not that bad a guy," he said. "But when the cards are dealt, I just want to destroy people."

The irony was he destroyed himself in the process. In Las Vegas, the world champion has a celebrity status, which attracts not just the admiration of poker players, but of other gamblers, women, fans and money.

Despite the huge sums won and lost in the top level games – the world championship prize is \$1m in cash – a player can rapidly go broke. When that happens, new backers are always eager to take a share of his action. The result is that for most of the time such a player is not really playing for himself, and money loses all meaning.

Ungar first came to attention at a young age in New York, where he had the reputation of being the strongest gin rummy player in the city. He grew up in Manhattan's Lower East Side where his father owned a bar. Ungar had a gift for

mathematics and, as he put it, a sixth sense about cards.

His father died when the boy was 13 and a year later his mother suffered a stroke. Ungar had to support himself and his family by hustling at cards. His skill at gambling was honed by playing with the wise guys who hung out at his father's tavern. The only trouble was, he was so successful at gin he wiped out his opponents, and with them his source of income. When he moved west, the same pattern was repeated in Las Vegas.

Seeking opportunity elsewhere, he turned to high stakes poker, and rapidly established himself. He won the World Championship at his first attempt, thus becoming the youngest title holder up to that time, and showed that his success was no fluke by winning several other big tournaments. No-limit Hold 'em was seen as his best game.

DAVID SPANIER

Stu Ungar, poker player: born New York 1953; one daughter; died Las Vegas 22 November 1998.



Observation in the bush







DILEMMAS  
WITH VIRGINIA IRONSIDE

## Should I tell my parents they ruined my childhood?

Nicolette's counsellor has suggested that she write her parents a letter outlining how she felt they let her down in childhood. She can't bear to do it because she knows it would upset her mother and that her father would never speak to her again. But her counsellor says her own mental health is more important than any pain she might cause. An unprecedented number of readers wrote to tell her what she should do

## WHAT VIRGINIA SAYS

**M**y own late father always advised me that writing angry letters was a good thing. "Write it, sleep on it, rewrite it, wait a week, make another draft to make it even more vicious, sleep on it again, then cut it down to half, and make a fair copy," he would say. "But never, never, under any circumstances, send it."

It seems extraordinary that a counsellor is pushing Nicolette to do something that she instinctively knows is wrong. It's easy to write the letter, easy to post it, but how will she deal with the feedback? This is a letter, after all, one that can be read and reread, hurting again and again.

Far from clearing the air, it will fill it with fire and smoke and tears. It may well be that her parents will cut themselves off from her, they will feel so hurt and angry. Could Nicolette cope with that, along

with all her other problems?

How are Nicolette's parents going to feel when they open up this bombshell from a daughter whom they may well have loved deeply in their own way? Does she have any ideas of the stresses and strains they were under as they brought her up? Has she any concept of the thinking about child upbringing that existed when she was young?

Perhaps she was left to scream and scream because her parents thought, according to books they read at the time, that it was the right thing to do. Perhaps they had had appalling difficulties in their own childhoods which made them unable to be the ideal parents that she fantasises about.

I know I resent my mother for always making me wear horribly fashionable clothes when I was small, which made me look ridiculous. But she did it because as a child she was always forced to wear grey school uniforms and

hand-me-downs, and would have given anything to have looked pretty and up-to-date. She thought I would like it. Nearly everyone could dredge up bitter criticisms of their parents.

Obviously, if Nicolette's parents consistently abused her physically and psychologically, and she basically hates them and never wants to see them again, a letter would be fine. It would be a form of justice. But it certainly doesn't sound as though things were like that in Nicolette's home.

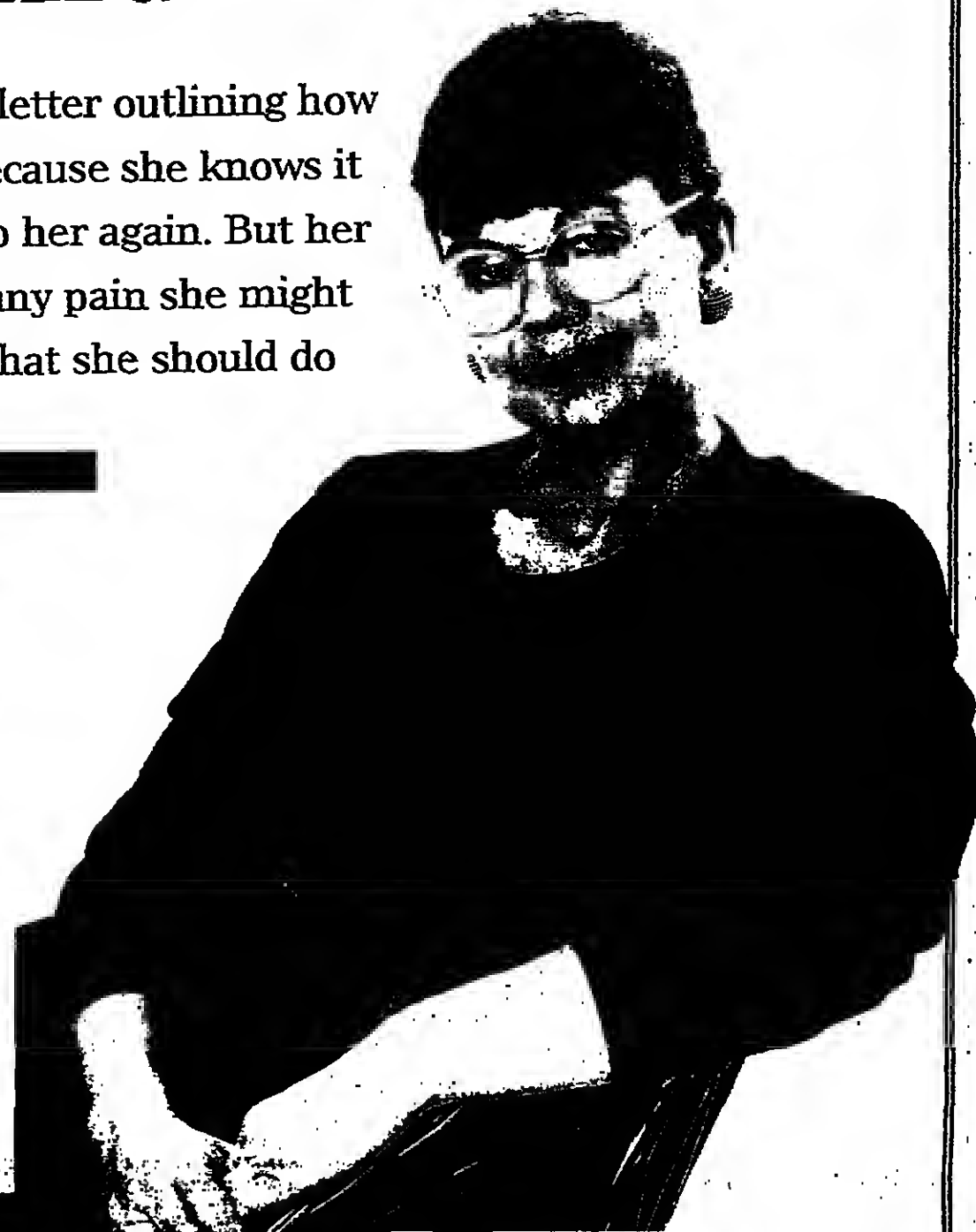
Now, to confront her parents face to face, in a spirit of inquiry rather than resentment, could have completely different results. "I have never really understood why you sent me to boarding school when you knew I was so unhappy there." "I often thought, when I was small, that you never talked to me or listened to me because you thought I was stupid. Was I right?" These are remarks

that would imply no direct criticism, just an interest in what her parents' motives were. Her parents might be hurt, but certainly not devastated.

This could be healing, but only if Nicolette feels comfortable with it. But on the whole, counselling should involve helping a client to get in touch with her feelings of anger and resentment about her parents and to acknowledge and "own" them.

Only then can she forgive her parents - and perhaps get in touch with the kind things they did as well. And then she can get on with living her own life.

I wonder what the counsellor would suggest if Nicolette's parents were dead. Would she say that that was a pity because now she'd be stuck with her problems forever and she'd never be able to resolve them? Of course not. Nicolette would have to resolve them internally. Which is what she must do now.



## WHAT READERS SAY

Seize the moment  
In my case it was my father to whom I wrote as my mother was dead. It was not easy, but it was a wonderful release. It forced him to acknowledge me. It began the process of sorting out our relationship. It took ages to get him to even agree that I had a point, but in the end he did. My only regret is that he died before we could complete the journey together, but we were much closer than we would otherwise have been.

Did it upset him? Of course it did. But that was his problem. I realised that my debt to myself was more important than my concern for his feelings. That lifetime subordination of feeling was at the heart of the problem - it had suppressed and belittled me.

Once I finally rebelled against it, I began to feel better. Counselling was no longer necessary. I was free at last.

Nicolette, this is the moment. Be strong. Seize it. Make it happen. Engage. Write that first letter. You will never regret it.

PETER MORGAN  
Durham

Spare yourself the guilt  
Don't post that letter. I did and it caused a lot of pain on both sides. My parents were baffled by my views - they felt that they had done the best for me in difficult circumstances.

Telling your parents how you feel won't benefit your mental health. It will just make you feel guilty and possibly worse than before.

Go ahead and write down your feelings - then burn the letters.

GINA GORDON  
Leeds

No one has ideal parents  
My advice to Nicolette is to immediately stop seeing her counsellor. With the money she saves she could have a great night out with her best mate at her local pub, and tell her friend what rotten parents she had. I guarantee that her friend will then tell her that her own mother and father were far from ideal. The two of them could then discuss how they themselves would be perfect parents with angelic children.

I failed my own children at times, but we love each other.

RUTH ANGUS  
Bath

They're odd, not you  
In order to move forward you have to let go of the past. By encouraging you to challenge your parents' past behaviour in the form of a letter, your counsellor is trying to help you see this. If you don't tell your parents what they have done, they will carry on behaving in the same way, and you will continue with this burden and not get on with your life. Your parents may not change but you can.

I am nearly 29 and both my parents suffer from psychiatric disorders and have done some terrible things. Thanks to a counsellor I have learned to have the courage to stand strong against them.

Go on - post the letter.

Take one step at a time and you'll find the strength comes to you naturally. They are the ones who are odd - not you. When you realise this you'll wonder why you wasted so much time. I do.

JO HAMMOND  
Leicester

I would be shattered  
I left my sons, aged five and three, with their father when we divorced in 1965 and, although they came back to live with me as teenagers, I suffered from enormous guilt, and still do, at this desertion of them. They are now in their thirties, both very successful, and they assure me that what happened to them as children was part of life and any unhappiness

they may have experienced as adults is not my fault; they are responsible for their own lives now.

If they were to write me a letter such as Nicolette's counsellor advises, I would be totally shattered - we can only do the best we can as parents, and often that best is not good enough. For Nicolette's parents to be told, out of the blue, that they handled her badly would be terribly cruel. She should tear up the letter - surely writing it has been cathartic enough!

KATHARINE ODGERS  
Hove, E Sussex

I needed to shock them  
Nicolette's letter reminded me of a letter I wrote to my mum in 1983. I spewed out,

in graphic detail, events I had suffered in silence for the previous 21 years. I meant to shock and I meant to hurt and because no one in my family had any support to deal with what I revealed I caused a major rift between myself, my immediate family circle and the wider network of our relatives, which has remained to this day.

From the moment my letter was sent I effectively - and painfully - forced myself to move on. To my family what I had said was so unimaginable that their only option was to totally deny what I'd written and immediately close ranks.

It has taken me 12 years to reclaim the self-respect and love I knew I deserved

in my life, and I can state that I now feel no guilt or shame about the effect my letter had on my family. I knew deep down that I had no alternative.

ANONYMOUS

Accusations are useless  
How can the counsellor know that her parents can look after themselves - such an accusation could have a devastating effect on them.

My sister tried exactly the same solution to a problem she felt she had with our parents. Her perception of our upbringing was entirely at odds with mine, but she was convinced they had caused her untold grief. The letter had a devastating effect on our parents and they never fully recovered from the accusations levelled at them, and also, it did her no good at all.

ANONYMOUS

Ditch the counsellor  
Imagine, if you will, the postman arrives tomorrow morning with a letter in your mother's hand. It's not your birthday and it's too early for Christmas. You open the envelope to find - lo and behold - a detailed, planned, precise account of

every way you have let your parents down - from toddler tantrums, through adolescent sullenness and teenage arrogance, to twentysomething distance. How would you feel? After all, as you pointed out, you are 27 and, like them, can look after yourself - can't you?

Ditch the counsellor and try talking to your parents. You might actually resolve the problems your therapist has been charging you £20 a week to discuss.

J WOODBRIDGE  
Surrey

Talk to your parents  
Perhaps it would be more helpful to exorcise the pain by putting a chair in front of you and pretending that you are talking to your mum and your dad. You could explain how you feel without having to worry about their feelings. I, too, once wrote a letter to my parents but decided not to send it. I simply asked each one individually if they loved me. For me that was all that was needed and it enabled me to see them as they were then - young, insecure and human.

LYNDA FAULKNER  
Chessington, Surrey

## NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

Dear Virginia,  
Some friends and I are organising a skiing party in January. We have a mutual friend who is getting increasingly irritating. She is deeply unhappy, an unemployed single parent, who demands to be the centre of attention and has a vicious temper. She also expects everything to be done for her. We care enough about her to put up with her even when

she brings her nine-year-old son along, who is a nightmare. On occasion, she is capable of extraordinary kindness. But several people have said they'd have to think twice about coming if she and her son are asked.

We can't not ask her. It would be too unkind. She considers herself to be a pivotal part of our circle. What can we do? Do we have to sacrifice the holiday? Or

should we just put up with her?

Yours sincerely, Sonia  
Anyone who has advice quoted will be sent a bouquet from InterBox. Please send letters and dilemmas to Virginia Ironside, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, fax 0171-293 2182, or e-mail: dilemmas@independent.co.uk - giving a postal address for sending the bouquet.

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## POETIC LICENCE

THE NATIONAL HAPPINESS INDEX BY MARTIN NEWELL  
ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREW BIRCH

The Government has proposed a "quality of life" barometer to measure the happiness of the nation with key headline indicators such as housing, transport, health and land use

Can we measure happiness?  
Labour answers firmly, "Yes." But in case of lingering doubt. Try these indicators out:

Rainy day, with cup of tea  
Lying in bed with small tv.  
British film, made '43  
"Happy dahlings?" Terribly.

Moving out of well-loved bouse  
Due to job-loss/errant spouse  
Going back to clean the thing  
Crying in car of rebound fling.

Waking without aching head  
After vat of Spanish red  
Having got away with it  
Due to some divine remit.

Stuck on train one weekday night  
Driver waiting for green light  
Tammy burbling in old nurse  
While you miss the latest Morse.

Local, full of Bridget Joneses  
Shouting in their mobile phones  
Smoking, drinking G & T  
Far too noisy. (not v.g.)

Friday night at five-to-eight  
Wedge in pocket, red-hot date  
Just about to go for beer  
Cat crawls in with torn-off ear.

Saturday in Casualty  
After gardening tragedy  
Sat behind two football jobs  
Listening to distant sobs.

Taking all these factors in  
Giving it the usual spin  
Are we happy? Do we know?  
Yeah. Delirious. Can I go?



Opinion 150



# Katie just wanted to help others

Katie Sullivan, a 23-year-old carer for the mentally ill, was stabbed to death by a patient six years ago. Now it has happened again. Why? By Grant Rollings

The death of Jenny Morrison, the 50-year-old social worker who was killed at a care-in-the-community hostel in Balham, south London this week, brought back bitter memories for Sandra Sullivan. Although the precise circumstances of Jenny Morrison's death have yet to emerge, the killing at a hostel reminded her of the death of her own daughter six years ago.

Like Jenny, Katie Sullivan was devoted to her job, caring for the mentally ill. Ideally, perhaps, she told her mother a day before her death: "One day I will teach those around me, doctors included, to respect those who are mentally ill."

Katie was 23 when she began working as a carer in Kingston for a MIND hostel for 22 an hour. She had read psychology at Swansea University and planned to study for a doctorate at Oxford University. On the day she died, Katie was washing up in the kitchen of the hostel when a female patient, Eriyenne Inweh, walked up behind her. She picked up a carving knife and thrust it into Katie 14 times, piercing her heart, liver and lungs. Katie's screams were heard by a fellow patient who alerted the hostel manager. The manager discovered Inweh kneeling over Katie still stabbing her. Inweh, 22, had used violence before but Katie was unaware of the extent of the patient's violent nature.

In fact, Katie had struck up a friendship with Inweh, even introducing the patient to her family. However, Inweh had become upset when Katie told her that she'd applied for a £200-a-week job as a care assistant. The day before her attack, she'd stopped taking her medication and only eight days earlier, that medication had been halved.

When Katie died, Sandra Sullivan, now 53, and her husband Mick expected sympathy and help from her employers and from the legal authorities. They felt, though, that there was no help. Lawyers representing the council which was responsible for the hostel where Katie was killed, even said the Sullivans would "save money" in the future by not having to pay for Katie's Christmas and birthday presents.

Sandra says: "Katie was frequently referred to as a 'calculated risk' and an 'unfortunate incident'. Treading in dog dirt is an unfortunate incident."

Sandra, who has four children, says: "Our family was obviously devastated, but we only had each other to turn to. There was no help from outside. Most of all we wanted answers, but everything was very secretive. At first we thought it was a million-to-one chance that Katie had been killed. But as we looked harder, we found it could have been avoided."

Over the past six years, Mick and Sandra have battled for justice for their daughter. It has been extremely difficult for them to see a string of similar cases crop up in the news among people working in the mental health sector. A year after Katie died, Jonathan Newby, a 23-year-old postgraduate student, was working in a homeless hostel in Oxford. He was stabbed by Andrew Rouse, a schizophrenic who

attack a fellow patient who she believed was the Anti-Christ. Despite spending £50,000 in legal costs trying to force enquiries and to get answers the couple were constantly thwarted by red-tape. Sandra is a calm, well-educated woman, but there is no hiding the abiding feeling of anger and revulsion. She only refers to Inweh as "it".

Sandra says: "When it took my daughter's life it gave up the right to be recognised as a human being because that is not human behaviour. To me that person will always be an 'it'."

Eventually Inweh was cleared of Katie's murder and sent to Broadmoor indefinitely. Sandra is still shocked by the detail that emerged after the court case. "Potentially violent patients were not normally admitted to the MIND hostel in Kingston because it was supposed to ease them back into the community," she says.

The social worker who admitted Inweh to the hostel did not know all the details of the previous hospital attack and told the MIND hostel that she had not been involved in "life-threatening behaviour".

Now another hostel worker has been fatally stabbed. "But I know our campaigning has done some good. We have made people sit up and listen. Now we need real change. Not only has Care in the Community cost the life my daughter Katie. I believe it cost the life of my husband as well," Sandra says.

A couple of months ago Mick Sullivan, 56, died from a heart attack, sitting next to Sandra in the car. He had just learned that the Sullivans would not be able to have legal representation at a mental health tribunal which was due to discuss the possible release of Katie's killer.

Now Sandra is carrying on the work alone; among other things, she would like research to be carried out about the long-term effects of sudden or violent deaths on families. She would also like to make the voice of victims of crime more audible and has helped to launch an umbrella group for victims organisations called Victims' Voice. Organisations backing the charity include The Suzy Lumplugh Trust and The Zito Trust.

"I only hope that this latest killing can finally make something happen," Sandra says.

While Inweh was detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act, it was discovered that she had already used a sharp weapon to

was later sent to Broadmoor. In the same year, Georgina Robinson, an occupational therapist at Torbay Hospital, was killed by Andrew Robinson, who had planned to kill John Major.

Michael Howlett, director of the Zito Trust says: "People who have commitment to doing good can be taken advantage of. All too often there is no training offered. They're left to supervise shifts, often on their own and deal with people who really are too dangerous to be in the community."

Sandra is still determined to improve standards for these employees and volunteers. For example, she wants other mental health workers, like their daughter, to be told about the background, violent or otherwise, of patients they're working with.

While Inweh was detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act, it was discovered that she had already used a sharp weapon to

phone project quickly snowballed, however, and the charity now has offices in six countries. It has successfully persuaded big names from showbiz and the arts to get involved - from David Bowie to Tom Stoppard to the Spice Girls. Its best known project is the new Pavlov's music centre in the city of Mostar, launched with an opening concert by Big Luciano himself. But the charity has now broadened well beyond its original base, with projects in Guatemala, Chechnya, and across Africa.

But is there not something odd about this sense of gorging oneself to raise money for those who have nothing? Bell admits that he might draw the line at "feasting for famine - that would be too much". In this case, however, he argues that the end justifies the pleasurable means. His own experience as a war correspondent influ-

enced his support for War Child. "What struck me is the extent to which, in modern warfare, kids are targeted. Children are very much in the line of fire."

To which end, your conscience can allow you a gastronomic splurge. Each restaurant has come up with its own "theme night". Malson Novelli in London's Clerkenwell is offering a free children's menu for children who agree to become pen-pals with children from War Child projects across the world; at Zilli Fish, Stephen Fry and Natalie from All Saints will be among the celebrities who will serve customers during the day; and so on. Aldo Zilli himself says: "I've never been enthusiastic about giving money away. This is the first time. It came from the reactions of people I spoke to. If we can help by enjoying ourselves, why not?"

For a full list of participating restaurants, ring the Feast for Peace hotline on 0217-916 6000



The 'halfway house', in Balham, south London, where Jenny Morrison was stabbed to death



Jenny Morrison, the 50-year-old social worker killed this week



Katie Sullivan, the 23-year-old stabbed to death in 1992

## Dining in a good cause

Restaurants are raising money for charity. All we have to do is eat, drink and be generous. By Steve Crawshaw

MARTIN BELL, tucks into goat's cheese heigets with tapenade and vegetable nicoise he had hesitated briefly over the smoked salmon with cockle butter, but his wife Fiona eventually plumped for that one). Then comes the main dish, including a choice between Dover sole with cucumber, brown shrimp and dill, and roast scallops with bouillabaisse and green olives. Another glass of chardonnay? That would be nice. Dessert wine, to round off the evening? Nice still. At Richard Corrigan's quietly fashionable Lindsay House restaurant in Soho, central London (where the Prime Minister was a recent guest), we are enjoying a gastronomic treat with the former BBC correspondent and current independent MP for Tatton. And it is all in a good cause.

For this is where the borderlines between pleasure and charity are irrevocably blurred. This week's dinner was the first of a series of money-making eat-ins organised by

the charity War Child. "Feast for Peace" events, officially launched tomorrow, will take place at more than 100 restaurants across the country in the next few days. The idea is to bleed customers of their money while they have a good meal. Participating restaurants, in turn, agree to give 25 per cent of their takings to charity. The more you eat, the more they'll give. What better reason to order another bottle of wine? It's all for charity.

John Carmichael of War Child explains the simple idea: "To do good while having a good time." Those who have signed up for the honorary committee of the Feast for Peace include chefs Jean-Christophe Novelli, Aldo Zilli and the Nosh Brothers.

War Child came into existence in Bosnia in 1993, where film-makers Bill Leeson and David Wilson wanted to do something - anything - to help the children they had seen. The two men and a

phone project quickly snowballed, however, and the charity now has offices in six countries. It has successfully persuaded big names from showbiz and the arts to get involved - from David Bowie to Tom Stoppard to the Spice Girls. Its best known project is the new Pavlov's music centre in the city of Mostar, launched with an opening concert by Big Luciano himself. But the charity has now broadened well beyond its original base, with projects in Guatemala, Chechnya, and across Africa.

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## 'The evil pair' - but are they the bombers that never were?

Continued from page 1  
number if you want it." The reporter - subsequently identified by The Independent as a journalist for Israeli radio, and who denied any attempt to "bottle" the jury - was interviewed by the police but allowed to remain in court during the trial. Gareth Peirce tried to obtain the film from the Israeli embassy security videotape camera that must have shown the bomber - only to be told that the security camera was not working on the day of the bombing. Both the accused could prove that they were not at the scene of the bombing - Alami had been making a telephone call from the Imperial College library at the time, had forgotten where she was when the bomb exploded (as she might well have to prove her alibi when her solicitor found that the telephone in the library recorded the time and number of calls).

But once Alami and Botmi decided to name Moghrabi - having apparently begun to realise the degree to which they had been "set up" - the authorities took little interest in the revelation. She was not asked to provide a portrait of the man who may well - if she was telling the truth - have been behind the bombings. "There is no independent evidence of his existence, and we never had an address, telephone number... no

business reference, no bank account, no credit card reference..." Mr Justice Garland remarked: "Well now, is he real? Is his name a label for someone else, or is he a fictitious character carefully tailored to fit those parts of the Crown's case to which there is no answer?" As far as the couple were concerned, the judge might have added: "he could have been a Mossad agent, a police informer, or goodness knows what, for all they knew."

The name Moghrabi can be Arabic or Jewish, Lebanese or Palestinian - most Moghrabis in the Middle East would trace their ancestry to the 18th-century Spanish expulsion of Jews and Arabs to the Maghreb of North Africa. Moghrabi may be a name as false as the intentions of the man in whom Alami and Botmi placed their trust in 1992.

But since Alami and Botmi put together their portrait of Moghrabi separately from each other - in two different prisons where they were being held - and since the two faces are similar, he almost certainly did exist. And from their memory of his words, it is also possible to reconstruct his story. Agents, after all, are always encouraged to build their identities around events that really happened, because it is easier to stick to a biography if some of it is actually true.

Born in the West Bank around 1960, and to parents who had abandoned their home on the coast during the 1948 flight of Palestinians from what became Israel, Moghrabi grew up in Nabliu or Ramallah. Arrested by the Israelis for "resistance activities" in 1978 or 1979, he moved to Jordan where he taught at the Barqaa refugee camp. In early June 1982, Moghrabi fought Israeli invasion forces on the Lebanese coast road south of Sidon. Falling out with both Yasser Arafat's PLO and Arafat's opponents in Damascus, he left Lebanon via Syria and Cyprus for Britain where - through refugee status or marriage to an Englishwoman - he went into business with Gulf contacts. In the mid-Eighties, he moved to Kuwait but then fled when Iraq invaded in 1990, returning to Britain to live in Birmingham.

Alami met Moghrabi for the first time in the spring of 1992, after they both attended a London lecture on the Middle East. Moghrabi began discussing "resistance problems" with Alami and Botmi in 1993, recalling his experience in Lebanon. "Moghrabi was coming across as someone informative, critical, interesting and experienced," Alami was to recall. By March of 1994, they were talking about the techniques of bomb-making. Moghrabi seemed "knowledgeable". In June 1994,

Moghrabi used Botmi's help in buying a second hand Audi car - which was to seal Botmi's fate. A few days later, Alami and Moghrabi met for the last time.

"He had phoned me... saying he was leaving Britain and he might leave a few things for me," Alami recalled. "He said that he had been doing experiments, that he had produced (sic) he no longer needed... and thought of giving them to me." Moghrabi gave Alami explosives, boot-to-boot from his car to hers in central London. "I wasn't sure how to react but somehow couldn't say no," she says. Just after midday on 26 July 1994, the Audi car blew up outside the Israeli embassy in London. That night, another bomb exploded outside Balfour house in Finchley. Alami and Botmi were convicted of conspiracy - though not the actual bombing - in December.

The jury obviously concluded that Reda Moghrabi was a fictitious character. But if so, Alami and Botmi have produced a mighty convincing portrait of the "Man Who Never Was". And since even Scotland Yard agree that the convicted pair did not carry out the bombing - that there was someone else who actually planted the bomb - you might expect the police to show a little more interest in the man with the starting eyes.



# Sex, size and schizophrenia

Pushkin was a poet of paradoxes. Misogynist or feminist? Heretic or Christian? One thing is certain: he wasn't a tall man. By Daniel Britten

A few years ago Isaiah Berlin's book choice for *Desert Island Discs* was *The Complete Works of Pushkin*. To many it came as a surprise, since outside Russia Pushkin is usually regarded as a rather lightweight figure in world literature. In England he is known as "the Russian Byron", a hot-tempered, libidinous roué who died in a duel at the age of 37.

Yet things could change with the bicentenary of his birth, in 1999. Pushkin-mania, it seems, may be about to sweep through Britain. A new film of his epic poem, *Eugene Onegin*, starring Ralph Fiennes, is due for release next year. Before that, several books will appear, following a recently published biography by Elaine Feinstein, which will emphasise Pushkin's importance as a writer of international stature. There is even a Pushkin Bicentennial Trust, chaired by his great-great-granddaughter – one of several Pushkin descendants living in this country.

In Russia, however, Pushkin's importance as a national figure has never been in question. The author of poetry, fiction, plays and non-fiction, he is a staple feature of every Russian syllabus. Every Russian schoolchild learns some of his poems by heart. His status there is equivalent to that of Goethe in Germany or Shakespeare in Britain.

If the test of a canonical writer is his ability to appeal to different generations for different reasons, then Pushkin must certainly qualify as a genius. Anthony Briggs, the editor of a forthcoming collection of essays entitled *Why Pushkin?* (Hazar Publishing), explains: "Pushkin is so protean that every person or group can appropriate him for their own interests. For instance, in the Russian celebrations of 1881, Dostoevsky portrayed him as a great Russian nationalist; whereas in the Soviet era he was portrayed as a great proto-revolutionary because of his tenuous connections with the Decembrist revolt of 1825." Now, ironically, it is the Russian Orthodox Church that is championing

him as a devoted Christian, despite his having written a number of blasphemous, even heretical, poems.

In modern-day Britain, however, Pushkin appeals directly to our sensibilities because of his complex perspective on race and gender. Much can be made, for instance, of the fact that his great-grandfather was an African slave who was adopted by Peter the Great. Indeed, Pushkin inherited some of his family's pronounced African features, as seen by his dark skin and frizzy hair.

But while his mother was known as the "beautiful Creole", Pushkin was less physically attractive, and in his early French poem, *Mon Portrait*, he even describes himself as having "a proper monkey's face".

In her new biography, Feinstein argues that much of Pushkin's greatness stems from the sense of otherness that his looks, among other things, engendered. Feinstein argues that "Pushkin, well aware of the strand of rashness and passion in his make-up, ascribed it often and proudly to his black ancestry". This was evident not only in the poems about himself, but in those where he identified with other ethnic groups, such as the gypsies and the Jews.

Yet his attitude towards race, as with everything else, was paradoxical. Having initially boasted of his ancestry, he became disillusioned with it when it became the subject of mockery by members of the Tsar's court. His confusion can be seen in a poem about the vicissitudes of sexual attraction, called *To Yurev*: "While I, always an idle rake/Ugly descendant of a Black/Reared in a wilderness, can take/No pleasure in the pains of love. Whenever I have won a beauty/It is through shameless, hot desire." Indeed, if Pushkin's attitudes towards race were complicated, his feelings about sexuality were no less puzzling.

Pushkin is usually thought of as a Don Juan figure, seducing his way through the Russian aristocracy in imitation of his hero, Byron, whose portrait hung on his wall. He even, notoriously, compiled a "Don Juan list" of sexual conquests, and composed bawdy verses reflecting his fascination with erotica.

Again, there is a paradox, for while his attitude towards women was often derogatory, he appears to have idolised them in equal measure. Many of his relationships followed a familiar pattern, whereby his respect for them diminished as intimacy increased. He once said: "The less one loves a woman, the surer one is of possessing her." In his treatment of them it was, as Elaine Feinstein comments, as if he had taken to heart Alexander Pope's dictum that "most women have no character at all".

Perversely, however, he appears to have made a distinction between his views of them in real life and in his work. Recently on Radio 3's *Private Passions*, Claire Tomalin described *Eugene Onegin* as a work with clear feminist sympathies. In it, the heroine, Tatyana, falls in love with the hero, Onegin, and sends him a letter propositioning him.

Flummoxed by this act of female assertiveness, he rejects her, but then subsequently falls in love with her; by which time it is too late and she has married someone else. As Tomalin says, "There is no question that Tatyana emerges as the dominant force in the story".

In a sense, Pushkin's schizophrenic attitude towards women can be related to the culture in which he lived. The atmosphere of the Tsarist court in the early 19th century was a very laddish one, where women were primarily valued for their beauty, and men fought duels over them, sometimes for the most trivial of reasons. Pushkin fought at least six that we know of, and they usually involved someone else's wife. Ironically, in the one which killed him he was the innocent party.

A psychoanalyst would, of course, explain his eagerness to fight in terms of insecurity about his masculinity. He was, after all, only five feet tall, and remorselessly neglected by his mother as a child. But there were other factors, too, such as the acute sense of impotence that he suffered under the Draconian censorship of Tsar Nicholas I. There was also what Anthony Briggs describes as the "cultural aridity" of the court, and Pushkin's growing financial hu-



Pushkin, at just five feet tall and, in his own words, with 'a proper monkey's face'

Bridgeman Art Library

miliation caused by his father's refusal to give him any money. Yet, despite or perhaps because of a wealth of insecurities, he continued to write poetry of wisdom and maturity.

Naturally, in interpreting it thus, there is a danger of ascribing too many of our own values to an age which was fundamentally different.

But with so many modern parallels it is surprising that Pushkin's work has so far remained largely unfamiliar to the Western reader. With the publication of a new collection of his verse by the Folio Society next year, a major obstacle may be overcome. With new translations by, among others, Ted Hughes, Seamus

Heaney, Eavan Boland and Carol Ann Duffy (the one by Ted Hughes being his very last work), perhaps now at last we may be offered a glimpse of the true subtlety and versatility of Pushkin's work. For when Isaiah Berlin chose him for his *Desert Island* he said that Pushkin's genius stemmed from being "not a

man who tries to interpret everything in the light of some single all-embracing system... he expresses himself in many directions, as the spirit takes him". Pushkin, then, could indeed be the perfect emblem for our own chaotic age. Elaine Feinstein's *Pushkin*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20

## It's magnificent – but is it really a ballet?

A LOT of people have tickets for the British debut of William Forsythe's Ballett Frankfurt and I hope they find what they want. The Forsythe at the Sadler's Wells is not the post-classical choreographer made familiar by the Royal Ballet. This Forsythe is a post-post-classical dancer whose journey from his ballet roots has gone so far it is often unrecognisable as ballet.

You can still catch glimpses of the spectacularly extreme classicism

that first made Forsythe's name – although there are no pointe shoes here. But his own extraordinary dancers are more individual and versatile than the average ballet dancer.

They help him create choreography where phrases are broken down into small humps and twists, transitions magnified and energy channelled into a fluid continuum. They perform pieces where conventional stage etiquette is exploded, so that dancers saunter on and

### DANCE

BALLET FRANKFURT  
SADLER'S WELLS, LONDON

off, sit in secret contemplation or stand about disparately. They think nothing of manoeuvring their own lighting equipment or performing in pools of almost total blackness.

The last of the three pieces, *Quintet*, seems the most lyrical and the most direct. On the surface it is a se-

ries of choreographic variations for five dancers, starting with a solo for Stephen Galloway. But actually the cast all exist in a state of imminent collapse. Their contours wobble and constrict; their legs buckle; their duets become struggles to regain verticality. Gavin Bryars' accompanying *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet* sets a quietly emotional mood, as does the knowledge that Forsythe made the piece as a message of hope again death. At the end a lone woman

moves against a square of sky, and when she sinks backwards, a man steps out to push her back up.

*Hypothetical Stream 2*, made by communicating instructions via a stream of faxes, evokes an isolated human colony in a vast space, heads raised expectantly as if listening out for the melancholic trombone and intermittent foghorn. The performers operate individually, or else writhe in knotty clusters derived from drawings by Tiepolo. A joined-up trio,

for example, seethes and tugs like a single organism, while a woman stands frozen in mid-gesture.

There is no narrative, although with *Enemy in the Figure* we might be watching the shards of a nightmare, caught up in a swirl of darkness and light and the machine rhythms of Thom Willen's score. Figures run chaotically. A rope seems alive. And disturbing games of concealment and visibility play themselves out, with some dancers

hidden behind a giant screen and a man erupting to scramble desperately up a wall. It seems an apocalyptic vision of the collapse of form.

The Sadler's Wells programme gives an opening taster of his kaleidoscopic means and imagination. Rumour says he might return with one of his composite full-evening works. It might be hell for some, but it's heaven for me.

To 28 Nov (0171-963 8000)  
NADINE MEISNER

## Victoria would not be amused

THE NEAR life-size figures gambol across the wall, their black silhouetted forms startlingly strong against the whitewash. At first glance the image evokes pastoral gaiety but, on closer inspection, it reveals abuse and murder. Appearances can be deceiving.

*World's Exposition* (1997) by Kara Walker, takes the silhouette, considered a genteel and acceptable pastime for Victorian ladies, and subverts it to a tale of social inequality and comment on the racial prejudice that lay behind the master-slave relations that existed in the pre-Civil War American South.

The Victorian era, seen as excessively ornamental, socially repressed and sentimental, often gets a bad press, even though underneath all the paper dollies it was a time of great creativity, intellectual curiosity and technological innovation. To put the record straight and point out how far-reaching the Victorian legacy still is, *Secret Victorians*, a touring exhibition from the Hayward Gallery, has gathered the work of 20 contemporary artists from England and America to give a 20th-century spin to aspects of the Victorian age.

Mat Collishaw's *Soliciting a Reward* (1994) is modelled on a praxinoscope, devised by the photographer Eadweard Muybridge to

### VISUAL ARTS

SECRET VICTORIANS  
FIRSTSITE, COLCHESTER

present animal locomotion. But, instead of a horse, a middle-aged man busks with his accordion at the foot of an escalator deep in the Underground. Music hall music envelops the work, the musician moving ever so slightly, trapped in a never-ending merry-go-round.

The Victorians' invention and love of photography has been taken up by a number of the artists. Bill Jacobson's work plays on the Victorians' sentimental use of photography to commemorate the dead. In his soft focus *Interim* series he conjures up a sense of lost lives, which he explains has drawn on "feelings around the tentativeness and vulnerability of life in the age of AIDS" where photographs are often the only reminder that friends and family have after someone has died.

Hiroshi Sugimoto has also turned his camera on death with his photographs of Victorian criminals taken in Madame Tussaud's. The sharp focus of the St Albans Poisoner and the Brides in the Bath Murderer gives the figures a strangely life-like quality while retaining the waxiness of death. Photography was popular



'World's Exposition' (1997) by Kara Walker

with Victorian women as it was not considered high art, and was therefore an area in which they were given free reign.

Sally Mann's nostalgic images, which recall the work of Julia Margaret Cameron, focus on her children as they languish in the countryside, swimming and playing fancy dress.

Today we still live in Victorian houses and use Victorian furniture and William Morris prints. We are surrounded by 19th-century leftovers. *Secret Victorians* has taken the icons most familiar to us and inverted them. A paper dolly is blown up into vast proportions, all the

more claustrophobic for its gigantic size; Victorian costume is recreated using African prints; and a silhouette of two Victorian men playing chess with the utmost decorum is undermined by the inclusion of their hugely exaggerated genitals.

Queen Victoria, photographed at Madame Tussaud's by Sugimoto, stares out grimly at this reinterpretation of her empire, her grim expression and familiar down-turned lips looking far from amused.

*The Secret Victorians*, Firstsite, The Minories Art Gallery, 14 High Street, Colchester (01206 577067), until 5 Dec then on tour  
KATE MCKHALE

## When the clocks go back

### THEATRE

BETRAYAL  
LYTTELTON, RNT, LONDON

BY A slightly rum coincidence, the artistic directors past and present of the National Theatre seem to be adopting each other's babies at the moment. Last week saw Peter Hall's revival of *Kafka's Dick*, a play which was premiered in 1986 by his successor at the National, Richard Eyre. Now in the Lyttelton, the present incumbent, Trevor Nunn, mounts Harold Pinter's *Betrayal* which Peter Hall delivered into the world almost precisely 20 years ago in the very same theatre.

This piece is famous for dramatising in an anticlockwise direction the story of a wife's seven-year affair with her husband's best friend, beginning with a meeting long after the liaison is over and ending with the pass at a party that started it all.

Nunn's mildly disappointing production elects to shift the action forward by two decades so that the proceedings begin in 1988. Douglas Hodge's excellent Jerry, the literary agent lover, is now all leather jacket and laddish glottal stops, a manner in sharp contrast to the stuffy controlling public school deportment of Anthony Calf's publisher husband.

The revival's most egregious feature, though, is the set by Es Devlin which looks like a pointed homage to Rachel Whiteread's notorious

cast of a house. An eccentric environment for this play? Well, in the desolate scene where the lovers decide to break up, Imogen Stubbs's over-girlish Emma refers to the flat where they have had their afternoon trysts as "an empty home" and Jerry denies that it is even that. By insinuating all the play's episodes in a bleak, soulless travesty of a family habitat (using coloured projections for the decor) the production over-insistently requires us to appreciate how the intricate web of betrayals has reduced the world to an ashen lie.

The production flows beautifully, the reworded scenes succeeding each other in a lateral drift across the stage. Subjective recollections of key incidents (the lapping water of a Venetian lagoon, a little girl's happy laughter etc) are flashed up in bafflingly close black-and-white footage on the set. The impression of moving back and forth in time, of Proustian efforts at retrieval and of following a stream to its poisoned source is powerfully conveyed.

Where this *Betrayal* falls short of excellence, for me, is in the psy-

chological dynamics. The play insinuates that, in a perverse way, the marriage was sustained by the adulterous *ménage à trois* and that the bond between the two men is undeniably the most intense. There are moments when the production genuinely shocks you with a sense of this (the nakedly passionate kiss Robert bestows on the weeping Emma after a social visit from Jerry), and moments where the true situation is so blatantly obvious, through inflection and gesture, you feel Jerry must be pathetically thick not to realise that Robert knows.

In the episode where he wrests the revelation from his wife, Cal's Robert superbly conducts a calm, lethal torture of her. But the comedy of the great restaurant scene afterwards – with an unwitting Jerry – does not have its full force here. Robert's sudden vituperative outburst against modern literature is too clearly a spasm of displaced anger and hurt whereas it should confuse Jerry and leave him in the ignominious position of darting from bullets he isn't absolutely sure have been fired. An ultimately under-charged *Betrayal*. In rep (0171-452 3000). A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper  
PAUL TAYLOR

20 Nov 1998







Grace, power, charisma: Bruce Lee had it all. And 25 years after his death, the actor and martial arts expert's influence doesn't stop at film. No. It's that whole guy thing... By Linton Chiswick

# Dragon heart

**B**ruce Lee died a quarter of a century ago, aged 32. He had brought Hong Kong cinema to an international audience, charmed Hollywood, and developed a form of kung fu as rich in philosophy as it was acrobatic in kicking style. When the newly fashionable kung fu and karate swept America and Europe, influencing everything from James Bond to the selling of cheap aftershave, Lee taught big screen hard men Steve McQueen, Lee Marvin and James Coburn how to kick above their own height. He was typecast as what commentator Bey Logan (interviewed below) calls "the great Asian master coming to shed his wisdom on the West".

These days, his influence is much more surprising. As London's National Film Theatre prepares for a commemorative season of Lee's work, "Bruce Lee Siu-Lung: The Man, The Myth, The Legend", it is his wide-ranging and discriminating followers who perhaps represent the untold story. Here, three of them tell of his considerable and far-reaching impact.

**The Fighter**  
Guru Lee Banda, World Welterweight Stick Fighting Champion from 1996 to 1998, teaches Jeet Kune Do (Lee's own martial art) at the International Combat Centre in Tonbridge. Banda was taught by five of Bruce Lee's closest students, including the great Dan Inosanto. He doesn't like many martial arts films, but owns all of Lee's.

"I would love it if you would write a piece that would make people realise what a good martial artist and teacher he was. Lots of his fans think he was just a film actor and that it was all trick photography. But although there is a difference between the theatrical kung fu on the screen and that of a combat situation, you still get the sense he could have got away with it all."

But what about his acting? There have been other great fighters, but none have captured the imagination like Lee. "Here was a guy who had one leg shorter than the other, one testi-

cle, was 5 ft 7", 140 pounds, and yet so graceful and powerful that I don't think his speed will ever be matched. He just cracked with charisma."

## The Dancer

Award-winning New York dancer and choreographer, Doug Elkins, exercises his right to eclecticism, incorporating street-style breakdance and streetwise parody into an electrifying set, seen recently at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. He's also a fan of martial arts, and practises Brazilian capoeira, Japanese aikido, Chinese "monkey-style", and Shaolin kung fu. He acknowledges the influence of Hong Kong cinema, and particularly the films of Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan and John Woo, on his own work.

"If you look at any kata [the set-piece of movements in martial arts], it's a ritualised choreography," says Elkins. "There's a story being played out. From the kata to the Bruce Lee films, there's movement information in there. Why make distinctions between dance and other movement? It's like the Jeet Kune Do saying: 'Use what is useful.'"

Bruce Lee was one-time cha-cha champion of Hong Kong. His films include elaborately choreographed set pieces, shot from a distance, in which whole groups of fighters move as one single organism. When the camera closes in on Lee, the battle is played out in strange, cartoon-like facial gestures. For Elkins, these techniques are part of the fun. "All these gestures, over-emphases... we in the West may see it as melodrama or over-acting, but it's fascinating. The violence is always done in revenge for something, like 'You've disgraced my sister', or whatever it is in *Enter The Dragon*, when rather than being taken, she takes her own life. Then when he comes and beats the man, there's an almost orgasmic expression of pleasure on his face. It's kind of like the predecessor of *A Clockwork Orange*, except it's morally justified."

So how does an appreciation of Bruce Lee manifest itself in a chore-



Bruce Lee: no other fighters have captured the imagination like him

Kobal

ographer's work? "Martial arts offer me something very distinct, very intimate. Whenever you attack someone, whether it's physically or emotionally, you actually make yourself vulnerable by expressing who you are. And with martial arts, when someone's swinging at you, you don't have to pretend. It's like someone slapping their child down in a tube station. You're drawn to it, the actuality of it. It's very dynamic."

## The Fan

Bey Logan is the author of *Hong Kong Action Cinema* (Titan) and currently works for Media Asia, the company that owns the rights to the Bruce Lee filmography. Like many of the new generation of Bruce Lee fans, he began watching the films after Lee's death. However, since moving to Hong Kong, he has worked with peo-

ple who knew Lee during his Hong Kong heyday. What does Logan think it was about the man that still attracts such international fascination?

"His movies celebrate the male aesthetic in a way that men from any background feel comfortable acknowledging. From your choreographer in New York to your truck driver from Bradford, any man can look at a Bruce Lee movie and say: 'Boy, that guy can move!' And then, of course, you have someone who was a philosopher and a marvellous speaker. Only in Bruce Lee did you get this nexus, all these things in one person."

What does Logan make of Lee's odd acting style? Within Lee's extraordinary flirtation with the camera, he occasionally appears to enjoy his own private, post-Modern joke with the audience. "I don't believe Lee was sending up the Hong Kong style.

Bruce's father was a very famous opera performer, and so he'd soak up all those basics as a youngster and then refer to them."

For Logan and countless others, Lee's importance transcends martial arts. "People are always asking how come we haven't had the new Bruce Lee. I say we have, but we haven't recognised him or her. The new Bruce Lee is the choreographer who, in his own art form, has been inspired to transcend the old rules, has had success and said, 'This is my Jeet Kune Do'. If Bruce's legacy has any relevance to the modern world, it must be that. The new Bruce Lee might be a middle-aged woman in Twickenham who started writing poetry after watching *Enter The Dragon*."

*Tracking the Dragon* is at the NFT, London, Sun to 9 Dec

## ALSO SHOWING

THE SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS  
TAMARA JENKINS (15) ■ THE WISDOM OF  
CROCODILES PO-CHIH LEONG (18)  
IF ONLY MARIA RIPOLL (15) ■ THE  
PHILADELPHIA STORY GEORGE CUKOR (U)

IF YOU'VE ever wondered what a "dingbat" is then look no further than *Slums of Beverly Hills*, a modest and very likeable rite-of-passage movie written and directed by first-timer Tamara Jenkins. As 15-year-old Vivian (Natasha Lyonne) explains, dingbats are crummy two-storey apartments, the sort of place where her father (Alan Arkin) tends to install Vivian and her two brothers amid the grubbier districts of Beverly Hills.

The arrival of favourite cousin Rita (Maria Tomei), a recovering addict, brings the girl some much-needed female company and a useful primer in the joys of the vibrator. While the genre material (loss of virginity, sibling conflict, climactic family hush-up) and the period (the Seventies, of course) have been heavily overworked, Jenkins personalises the story through her forgiving tone, helped no end by Arkin's gruffly affectionate father, Tomei's wayward Rita and Natasha Lyonne's precociously composed heroine.

*The Wisdom of Crocodiles* opens with the image of a mangled car perched in a tree, and proceeds to scale ever higher towards the inexplicable and absurd. Jude Law plays Steven Griscz, a vampire with a difference: he needs not just the blood of the young women he preys on but their love too. Talk about fussy! His latest target is an alluring beauty named Anna (Elina Löwensohn), who's impressed by the way Steven can sketch upside down and quote from the *Song of Solomon*, little suspecting he's north London's answer to Bela Lugosi.

In the meantime, two police detectives (Timothy Spall and Jack Davenport) are pursuing inquiries into the disappearance of Steven's last girlfriend. Just when you think their investigation is warming up, the film decides to drop them from view altogether. This plot-hole might have been noteworthy if the director's grip on realism were not so

tenuous elsewhere. *The Wisdom of Crocodiles* might have got away with being laughable; the fact that it's funded by an Arts Council grant makes it deplorable too.

For her debut feature *If Only* Maria Ripoll deploys the same parallel universe gimmick as *Sliding Doors*. Struggling actor Victor (Douglas Henshall) is mauling over ex-girlfriend Sylvia (Lena Headey), who's about to get married. By the magical intervention of two Hispanic dustmen, Victor is allowed to wipe the slate clean and start over, but his second chance goes awry when he falls in love with Louise (Penelope Cruz) and Sylvia begins an affair with Dave (Mark Strong).

Set around the more photogenic reaches of Notting Hill, the film is the latest in a line of British romantic comedies that want very badly to be the next *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. The usual shortcomings undo it: over-eagerness to please, synthetic characterisation, and a script that just isn't up to snuff.

Considering it's an accredited classic of light comedy, *The Philadelphia Story* (1940) doesn't have that many brilliant lines. Its appeal lies rather in the impeccable timing of the repartee, the graceful playing and the sense of civilised fun that director George Cukor sparks from the tale of a society wedding that threatens to implode. Katharine Hepburn plays the haughty, priggish belle set to marry a respectable dullard when her ex-husband (Cary Grant) shows up to make mischief - and quietly save Hepburn's father from press scandal. Enter a reporter from *Spy* magazine (James Stewart) with photographer (Ruth Hussey) in tow and all the elements of a swooning romantic farce are in place. This was the only time Grant and Stewart appeared on screen together.

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THE WISDOM OF CROCODILES

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# My, how she's grown

How to put it delicately? Tamara Jenkins' first movie is a coming-of-age comedy about her adolescent, er, full frontal development. By Liese Spencer

**T**ake one photogenic adolescent. Add a large helping of plitudinous life lessons, a smidgen of sexual experimentation and a dash of adult corruption. Glaze with a saccharine voice-over and what do you have? The coming-of-age drama. This week, however, sees the release of an accomplished swipe at the youth wing of Hollywood's American Dream Factory.

Set in the 1970s, *The Slums of Beverly Hills* offers a blacky comic account of growing up poor in Los Angeles' richest neighbourhood. Seen through the eyes of 15-year-old Vivian Abramowitz, it's an everyday story of divorce, drug addiction and burgeoning bra size which eschews the tedious teleology of most rites-of-passage dramas to deliver an altogether grittier exploration of emotional and economic survival.

As with many first features, *Slums* draws on the experiences of its writer-director. Like Vivian, 27-year-old Tamara Jenkins was brought up by a divorced father and spent her childhood rent-dodging between a series of cheap Beverly Hills motel rooms. "When we moved from the East Coast I thought it would be like Oz. The streets were paved with gold, but we didn't have any. We were living in these crappy little boxes with thin walls that shook during earthquakes," she says. Cramped into such small spaces, Jenkins, like Vivian, had to endure the mortification of puberty as a "spectator sport".

"Looking back, adolescence is really filled with humiliation," says Jenkins. "Living on the outskirts of wealth gives you a massive inferiority complex. That's true of the whole Abramowitz family, but I was especially interested in how that mirrors the inferiority a girl of 15 already feels. Female development is a very public act. This has always fascinated me. Boys' bodies don't change visibly as they reach teenhood, but it's OK for them to stare at their sister's developing chests, it's OK for uncles to say: 'Heavens, you've filled out.' It's a stage when everyone seems to be staring at you and preying on you and I wanted to be honest about that."

*Slums* is not the first time that Jenkins has plundered her fractured family history for material. The 1980s saw the aspiring actress touring a solo show called *A Family Outing* around tiny New England venues. "Yes, I was a teenage performance artist," she confesses. "I would perform in front of photographs that I'd taken from the family album and copied onto slides. I wasn't consciously moving towards making a movie, but in a weird way I was. With me standing in front of the screen, telling the stories that went with the pictures, my show was like the lowest budget, most primitive movie you could make."

Regularly invited to perform in New York, Jenkins eventually moved there and enrolled at NYU film school. After a couple of short films, Jenkins' screenplay for *The Slums of Beverly Hills* was accepted for development at Robert Redford's Sundance screenwriting lab, and later sold to Fox Searchlight. There, it went through another year of pre-pro-



Tamara Jenkins: 'Looking back, adolescence is really filled with humiliation'

Emma Boon

duction, and the writer-director found herself under close scrutiny for the first time. "I'd never been confronted with that kind of structure before. I'd made performance art when my parents weren't paying attention, then films at NYU when no one was paying attention, then all of a sudden people were com-

"They were too poised and well-rehearsed," recalls Jenkins. "Luckily, Natasha (Lyonne) wasn't like that. She looked like a puppy whose legs are too long. She had that awkward physicality." Indeed, Lyonne was perfect for the role of Vivian in every respect except for her chest, which was a 32A.

cards came back I felt like an alien in my own land," yelps Jenkins. "Some of the audience had filled in cards saying: 'This film is really depressing, they're poor at the beginning and they're poor at the end.' I couldn't believe there were people who would have that reaction. You know, Vivian and the family grow. You just don't see it in terms of cash. The fact that the family are still poor at the end is the whole point. It's an anti-American dream."

After the test screenings, the studio insisted Jenkins use a voice-over. "I hope it's not oppressive. My fear was that it would suggest some great moral lesson," she says. So is she pleased with how the film turned out? "It's my first feature. My first experience of box-office figures and reviews and all those other things that are used to measure success. But basically, in Hollywood it all comes down to money." Jenkins adopts the mindless, sing-song chant of her imagined test audience: "She was poor before she made the movie and she's poor now" - so, I guess it wasn't a success," and she laughs the laugh of a teenage performance artist whose survived her first studio movie. After *The Slums of Beverly Hills*, you suspect, Jenkins will never be quite the same again.

*The Slums of Beverly Hills* is reviewed on page 12

'There was something of a disparity between my vision and what [the studio] wanted'

menting on what I was doing." Public female development, all over again...

Inevitably the studio was keen to iron out any unmarketable mixed-genre ambiguity and sell *Slums* as another cute coming-of-age comedy. "There was a disparity between my vision and what they wanted," says Jenkins. "In a way I was lucky because I could get some risky things through because I was funny, but there was stuff that was supposed to be more bleak. I wanted to explore how your anatomy starts to dictate your relationship to the world," she says. "The anxiety that Vivian's body creates in the family, and the way in which her interior life is alienated from her exterior."

Ironically, when Jenkins began to audition for her "stacked" ingénue, she found real teenagers too sophisticated.

"We gave her a set of prosthetic breasts," laughs Jenkins. "At our first rehearsal she was flinging herself around yelling: 'These are great, I love these.' She and [co-star] Alan Arkin even started playing catch with them. So I had to explain that Vivian has a different relationship to her body. In the end I said, all right, go out into the world and come back and let's talk about your experience. She walked out thrust into the universe and came back completely hunched. It was the perfect acting exercise. I couldn't have conceived of a better way to get the actor to find her emotional anchor for the role."

With supporting players Marisa Tomei and Kevin Corrigan on board, the film was shot and taken to an Los Angeles mall for test screenings. "After the

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| 2  | Blade                        | £1,067,918 |
| 3  | Ronin                        | £875,545   |
| 4  | Small Soldiers               | £304,437   |
| 5  | The Exorcist                 | £282,404   |
| 6  | There's Something About Mary | £263,955   |
| 7  | Mulan                        | £239,462   |
| 8  | Elizabeth                    | £203,531   |
| 9  | Rounders                     | £189,020   |
| 10 | Snake Eyes                   | £162,232   |

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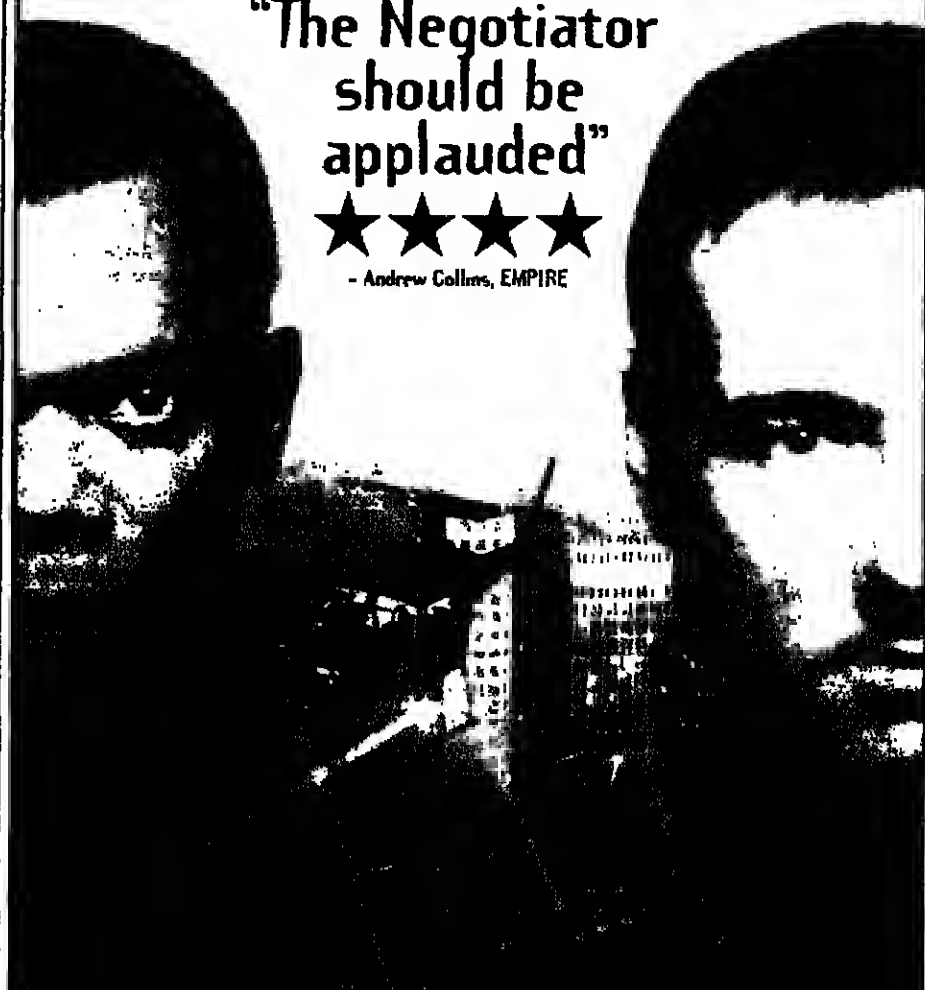
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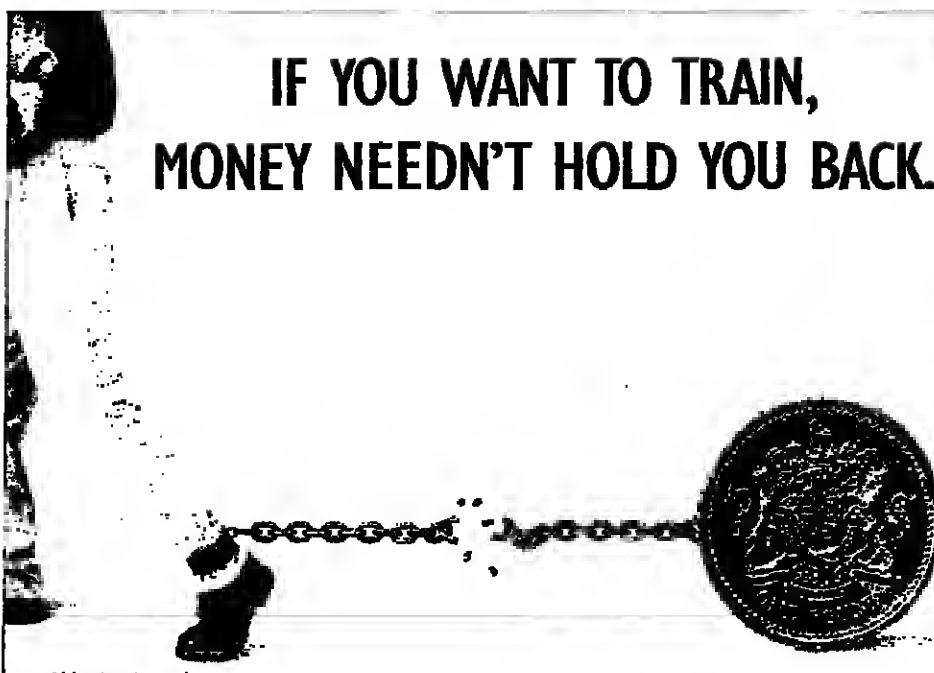
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'I may have no job or money but what I do have is possibilities,' says Rob Kay who recently left his well-paid IT job

Neville Elder

## New labour, new life

Switching careers as recession looms may seem like an insane gamble. But if you're in the wrong job, it could save your health and offer a new direction in your working life. By Annabelle Thorpe

**R**ob Kay, a successful 27-year-old director of his own IT company, recently joined the ranks of the unemployed - out of choice. A contract with a large company had come to an end and, despite the offer of a lucrative promotion, he decided his desk, drank his leaving beers and is currently living with one ear to the phone waiting for offers of new work.

"I have a fear of getting trapped in a company where the salary and responsibility are so much that I can't afford to leave, even though I don't actually know if the job is right for me," he explains.

He is not alone. "Feeling that you are in the wrong job is a very common problem for people in their twenties," claims Ben Fletcher, dean of the business school at the University of Hertfordshire. "Many people are unsure as to what career would suit them best, and many take the first job that comes along which sounds vaguely interesting and has a decent salary. Years later they find themselves stuck in a career that doesn't suit them, trapped by their position and salary."

Managing IT projects is certainly something Rob had never imagined doing at university. But like many students, he had never really imagined doing anything in partic-

ular. "I just sort of fell into banking after I graduated. The money was good and I had huge debts to pay off, so I progressed into IT without really meaning to. The problem is I'm not sure that this is what I want to be doing for the rest of my life, and the only way to find out what I do want is to break with routine and try different things."

An insane gamble? Not according to Professor Fletcher, who maintains the risks are bigger if you stay. "On a superficial level, unhappiness at work can cause frustration and stress, but it can also lead to depression and even physical problems such as heart disease." The best time to make the break, he adds, is during your twenties; a time when money and status are not as critical as they tend to be in later life.

But with the job market slowing down and more candidates becoming available for fewer jobs, the decision to change one's career can seem ludicrous to even the most daring of people. Angela Edwards, a policy advisor at the Institute of Personnel & Development (IPD), however, claims a recession may actually be beneficial to career-changers. "Recruiters are saying at the moment that they need people with good interpersonal abilities, who can cope with change, who are flexible and who have good transferable skills. A recession means

uncertain times so employers need people who can adjust to different needs. There is less requirement for particular kinds of experience or qualifications."

It is a myth, she adds, that employers think badly of people who have done two or three different jobs. "It's quite the opposite, in fact. As long as you don't switch profes-

*'It's a myth that employers think badly of people who have done two or three different jobs. It's quite the opposite'*

sions every six months, most employers understand that as we grow older and develop, so we may change what we want to do with our working lives."

The leisure industry is particularly honest about this. No surprises, then, that it is currently a top option for twentysomethings looking for a career change. The graduate Sarah Milne found herself running a busy Harvester outlet near Wolverhampton despite the fact that her degree and experience are in interior design. "Companies are more interested in your future capability than your past," she explains.

Cindy Jeffries, who left her legal career to become a bar manager, never looked back. "After I graduated, I took some temping work with a legal firm. They turned out to have a lot of showbusiness clients, and at first it seemed quite glamorous and exciting. When they suggested I took legal exams, I went for it without really thinking."

But over time, Cindy became cynical. "One night I was moaning away about work when one of my friends said, 'Since when did you want to be a solicitor anyway? You always wanted to run your own bar.' It was like a complete bolt from the blue. I'd got so caught up in passing exams and moving up the career ladder that I'd forgotten about my real dreams and ambitions."

"There are two aspects to a job," explains Professor Fletcher. "Motivators and hygiene factors. Hygiene factors are things like money, working conditions, travel time, colleagues; all the superficial things that most of us value incredibly highly. But it's the motivators that are far more important - responsibility, satisfaction - aspects of your job that make your day worthwhile and make you satisfied with how you have spent your time."

The psychologist Clara Johnson says that it isn't always necessary to leave one's old job before looking for another. "Often the best way is to re-

search a new career while you're still in the old one. Read up about it, learn about companies who could be potential employers. If there are qualifications you can gain, do them by distance learning or at night school. Take a week off work and try and get some work experience or job shadowing."

In any case, adds Johnson, if all else fails, you can always go back. "Some people need to leave a job before they appreciate what they had, and that doesn't have to be a bad thing. You may not be able to get your old job back, but there will be other similar jobs. The most important thing is get some perspective on what you're doing and make sure it's what you really want."

A career break is another safe alternative. "Increasingly available in larger companies, career breaks provide the opportunity for staff to take unpaid leave for several months at a time, giving them an excellent chance to try out a new career path," says the careers advisor, Charlotte Ashby.

"I may have no job or money," concludes Rob Kay, one week into his enforced unemployment, "but what I do have is possibilities. As long as I stayed at the bank I had one possibility, the bank. Now that I'm free, the possibilities are endless. It's a scary prospect. But it's also hugely exciting."

## A-Z OF EMPLOYERS LEHMAN BROTHERS

Age: 148

**History:** Brothers Henry Emanuel and Mayer Lehman founded the company in Montgomery, Alabama, as a commodities and trading operation. They soon acquired a seat on the New York Stock Exchange, and more than 100 years later, were bought by American Express, gaining a place on the London Stock Exchange in 1986. Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc was formed in August 1993, and six months later, the firm separated from American Express and became a public company.

**Address:** World headquarters are in the World Financial Centre, New York. European headquarters are in Broadgate, central London, and Asia-Pacific headquarters are in Tokyo.

**Ambience:** Dynamism and purpose are very evident here and the firm insists on professionalism and competitiveness. Employees wear smart dress except on Friday, when they dress down.

**Vital statistics:** Last year's net revenues were \$3,873 million, with an income of \$647 million. The company has around 8,300 employees, with 1,500 based in the UK. There are 39 Lehman Brothers offices worldwide.

**Lifestyle:** Hours can be from 7am to 7pm. Foreign travel is par for the course, and many employees spend more time on the road than in the office. Extended placements to locations such as Tokyo or Chicago aren't uncommon.

**Easy to get into?** The firm takes on 60 or 70 graduates each year, from 8,000 applications. Divisions include capital markets, investment banking, technology and

finance. High grades in A Levels and GCSEs are a bonus, and a minimum 2.1 degree is required in a subject such as maths, engineering, economics, computer science, physics and politics. Candidates should also be bright, articulate and ambitious, and able to work well in a team. For more details, see the company website at [www.lehman.com](http://www.lehman.com).

**Glittering alumni:** The Hon Raymond Seitz, former US Ambassador to the UK, is the firm's vice-chairman. Crown Prince Kyri of Bulgaria works for Lehman's asset management arm, and former employees include Ainsley Harriott.

**Pay:** Figures were not disclosed, but salaries are "very competitive" and there's no upper limit. Performance counts for all, and there's a package of benefits including health care and a share scheme, plus season ticket loans.

**Training:** Global training is held in New York; it's classroom-based and lasts for four weeks. There's also an ice-breaking exercise for new recruits in upstate New York. Back in London, there's more training and on-the-job exercises. Sponsorship is also available for MBA study.

**Facilities:** In London, there is an ice rink right outside head office, and there are discount arrangements at local gyms. There's also a snack bar on the trading floor, plus a 40-foot Christmas tree in the company's atrium during December.

**Who's the boss?** Bruce Lakefield, a former submarine commander in the US Navy, is chairman of Lehman Brothers in Europe.

RACHELLE THACKRAY



The Lehman Brothers' London office in Broadgate

## HELP DESK

YOUR CAREER PROBLEMS SOLVED BY THE EXPERTS

### 'I am an experienced trader's assistant, but can't find a job'

**The problem**  
I worked as a trader's assistant for a large American broking house in the City from 1991 to 1997. My hours were from 7am to 5pm - although I rarely left before 8pm - and my annual salary was £15,000. But they were unwilling to offer me the opportunity to progress. Since I resigned, I have been actively seeking employment in either a similar position or in settlements. I have joined over six reputable London agencies and have also kept in contact with former colleagues and clients. I have, however, been unable to find any temporary or permanent full-time work. Where am I going wrong?  
MARC SEDGE, LONDON

**The solutions**  
Nicholas Goulding from International Search, a leading executive search firm specialising in the financial services sector, says: "Identify the value that you would bring to a potential employer in terms of your skills and experience. This is, after all, what an employer is 'buying'. Secondly, identify the largest employers in the sector that you are interested in, and write to the respective heads of department, enclosing your CV. Follow up your letter with a telephone call. If you cannot reach the head of department, find out when it would be a good time

to call (such as after trading hours). When you do get through, be friendly. If they cannot help, ask if they can suggest whom you should contact."

Giles Brady, managing director of Brady International, a career management consultancy serving the City, with many financial institutions as well as private individuals among its clients, says: "Having worked in the trading environment, you are obviously familiar with marketing and selling. It looks as if you enjoy the responsibility of office management and administration, and your market sector knowledge is the City. You are clearly conscientious and are prepared to work long hours when it is necessary."

I would therefore suggest aiming to move away from broking and into an industry which serves the City. Use your sales and marketing skills to sell products into a sector you know. Sales support may be just right for you. Identify market sectors where your knowledge will bring benefit."

How about software or software solution companies? What about on-line live data feed providers? You know the needs of their clients and you speak the language. Find out who the main players are and contact them direct. If they are looking for people, they will be delighted not to pay an agency fee!

Ann Kutek, clinical director of Counselling in Companies, which is a leading specialist in staff counselling and manager consultation for the financial and corporate sectors, says: "The City is shedding many of its employees. While it is tempting to stick to the familiar, it will become increasingly frustrating to receive rejections from that or a related sector. One of the things we help people with when they are at a crossroads in their careers is to demonstrate how a small change can lead to growth in unexpected ways."

For instance, if you consider your interests outside work such as sport, the arts or voluntary work, you may find that you could combine them with a job. Your type of skills are always sought after in the public sector, local government and NHS as they have been run on business lines for the past few years. In addition, voluntary agencies, such as charities, are keen to have fresh input from the commercial world. Spread your net to where you have other connections.

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If you have a work problem, and want expert advice, write to Carmen Fielding, Fast Track, Features, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL; fax 0171-293 2182; e-mail: [c.fielding@independent.co.uk](mailto:c.fielding@independent.co.uk)

## Figuring it all out

ACCOUNTANTS, IT seems, cannot break away from their stereotyped image. For all the hype in recent years about accountancy being a dynamic profession that is central to modernising management practices, the results of a new survey reveal that old priorities still come out on top. Personality is not what employers want in their accountants - being able to count is, well, what counts.

In other respects, though, the demands on accountants are changing. Accountants are now expected to be wizards with information technology. Moreover, they should learn to work from a variety of IT platforms, and be capable of using several software packages.

One of the most important skills for today's accountant is to present complex financial information in a clear and relevant way to directors and managers, using new technology.

The other key skill highlighted in the latest survey strongly reflects the modern commercial environment. Accountants should learn transferable skills, enabling them and their employers to adapt to new and changing situations and contexts.

The New Accountants Skill Survey was conducted by the Institute of Financial Accountants together with the Edexcel Foundation, which is responsible for the BTEC higher national diploma in business and finance - a two-year, degree-level qualification with a strong emphasis on practical content and work placement - and the parallel part-time national certificate. The diploma is offered by 240 further and higher education institutes, including most of the former polytechnics, with more than 20,000 students studying it.

Survey results are being presented on Friday to an independent sponsored conference of recruitment agents, other accountancy institutes and education tutors. The findings will influence the future curriculum and examinations for the diploma.

Angela Hockley, business development manager for Edexcel, initially proposed the

### Paul Gosling looks at what counts in the world of accountancy

survey and helped analyse it. She was surprised by the results. She says: "We hoped to show that there wasn't the same need now for mathematical skills, but that did not come out at all. Instead, we found that design and creative skills are required as well, to give presentations using IT. Much of accountants' work is not just about number-crunching, but about finding creative solutions either for their own employers, or as accountants advising clients."

One of the aspects of the survey that surprised Edexcel and the IFA was the extent of changed expectations from when it was last conducted, five years before. Employers and recruitment agents now want much more from accountants, who are increasingly expected to provide whole-business solutions and be team players with other managers.

The results reinforce the previously stated view of the Confederation of British Industry that accountancy training should provide a wider skill base than has traditionally been the case. It also, says Edexcel, reinforces the need for a broad curriculum, compared with the narrower focus of the Qualification Curriculum Authority, which regulates the examinations.

Philip Dunn, a senior moderator with the IFA and an IFA council member, has also been working on a complementary exercise to provide more effective teaching on the courses.

The highly specialised nature of the courses - with separate modules specialising in cost, management and tax accounting and auditing - means that many colleges are dependent on part-time lecturers. "For example, not many colleges will have a need to employ someone full-

time to lecture on tax. It may be that a person coming in from outside to lecture on tax could use off-the-shelf materials."

Mr Dunn hopes his work will help the IFA to become better known, and more highly regarded. Although the IFA was established in 1916 as the Institute of Bookkeepers and is older than some of the major accountancy institutes, it has been treated rather as a second-tier body. It is determined to challenge that view.

The IFA is lobbying to be recognised by the European Union as a professional body, threatening legal action if recognition is not awarded.

It also wants to join the sector's joint consultancy forum, the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies, which contains the three chartered institutes of England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, together with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

Leon Hopkins, the editor of the IFA's journal *Financial Accountant*, argues that the IFA's qualification is well respected by businesses, although the qualification is different from that of the other institutes. IFA students are often more mature, with greater work experience.

"The other institutes' exams need employer support, which the IFA doesn't have, so it is unlikely to be the first choice for graduates," he says. "But it is a good choice for people who find themselves in accountancy in their mid to late twenties."

Hugh Laing, the newly appointed chairman of the IFA's council, plans a more aggressive campaign to promote the IFA and its sister body, the International Association of Bookkeepers. "We have to concentrate on shouting much louder about ourselves than we have in recent years."

The IFA conference, sponsored by The Independent, is tomorrow at the Kennedy Hotel, Canning Street, London NW1.



# Justice can be blind

The blind have a future on the bench. By Grania Langdon-Down

When Diane Cram takes her place today on the magistrates' bench, a gentle squeeze on her hand by the chairman will warn her when to bow as she can see nothing - neither light nor dark. But, with her nine-year-old German Shepherd guide dog, Prudence, at her feet, Mrs Cram is determined to maintain the dignity of the court and dispense justice as clear-sightedly as her fellow Justices of the Peace (JP).

Mrs Cram, 43, who has been totally blind for 15 years after suffering penicillin poisoning as a teenager, is the first blind fully-fledged JP to hear cases in the magistrates' court. She admits to being very nervous before her first day on the Exeter and Woford Bench last Thursday. Her main concern by the end of the day was how she could manage the magistrates' heavy chairs. Today is her second day on the Thursday bench and her last for the year - a new rota will start in the New Year, when she will sit regularly.

"I was terribly nervous. But I didn't feel that there was anything I could not cope with, or missed, during the day's hearings. The solicitors were aware of the situation, so they clarified points verbally rather than just referring to notes or reports."

"We heard a variety of cases - bail being broken, a combination order of probation and community service not being kept, and I wasn't out of line with what the others on the bench were thinking."

In fact, she admits, the only concession that there was anything unusual, or that any change had to be made in court to cater for her lack of sight was that a bowl of water was put in court for Prudence.

Mrs Cram says that before she was appointed to the bench, she went with a friend to listen in on a case in court. Her friend remarked that the defendant was filthy, whereas Mrs Cram said she thought that he sounded quite respectable.

She says: "Appearances shouldn't make a difference, but some people might have thought that he was guilty because of the way he looked. I wouldn't choose to be blind, but there is some advantage in not being judgemental for its own sake."

Andrew Mimmack, Clerk to the Justices at the court, says they did not intend making any reference to Mrs Cram's blindness when she was in court. "It would be embarrassing for her and would make the court somehow extraordinary when it shouldn't be."

The court would make sure that she was not listed to hear certain types of cases such as those involving video or identification evidence or a large amount of documents, he adds.

Three other visually impaired candidates, who will start hearing cases in the New Year, were selected with Mrs Cram during the summer to take part in a pilot scheme to see whether the requirement of "satisfactory sight" should still apply to the magistracy.

The Royal Commission on Justices of the Peace concluded 50 years ago that blind people should not be allowed to become JPs because they could not read documents, examine plans or observe the demeanour of witnesses, and they would not have the confidence of the public.

However, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, has argued



Diane Cram and Prudence: the only concession made in court was a bowl of water for the dog

that, with the exception of a minority of cases, blind people should be allowed to become magistrates. He will review their progress after a year. The prospect of blind magistrates has not been universally welcomed. Sir Michael Ogden QC, who retired last year after 33 years as a part-time judge, argues that "a zeal to avoid discrimination may in this instance result in injustice to either prosecution or defence, in some cases because the blind JP will not be able to observe the demeanour of a witness."

Sir Michael says he has received support for his views from magistrates around the country. He dismisses the Lord Chancellor's argument that blind magistrates would not be sitting alone but as members of a bench of three which would pool its assessments. He considers it is wrong to have anyone on the bench who is not fully effective. Blind people do many remarkable jobs, he concedes, but they should accept that it is not possible in a courtroom.

Lynda Belton, who will be sitting in Leicester, has no truck with Sir Michael's objections. "No one will be disadvantaged by having me on the bench hearing their case."

"A magistrate's main job is to listen, apart from reading the odd report, and I can listen as well as anybody else. What other people pick up from body language, I can

get from the intonation in someone's voice."

Mrs Belton, 49, has no central vision but some peripheral vision, so while she cannot read, recognise people or drive a car, she can walk around "perfectly normally".

Nick Watson, who is Clerk to the Justices in Leicester, believes that her training has gone very well. He is pressing the Lord Chancellor's Department for authorisation for a £3,000 optical character reader which scans printed documents and reads them back over headphones.

*'Body language is an unreliable measure of truth, and it is open to blind magistrates to judge someone's truthfulness from clues other than visual ones'*

This would enable Mrs Belton to consider pre-sentence reports or doctor's certificates along with her colleagues on the bench. Handwritten letters would have to be read out to her.

Mr Watson says: "I was led to believe that there would be no difficulties, because of the importance of the Lord Chancellor was placing on the subject. However, wheels grind slowly. But I am confident we will get the equipment before she starts sitting."

In Wiltshire, David Brewer is the

Clerk to the Justices at Swindon Magistrates' Court where Giles Currie and Peter Carr will be sitting. He was candid about his initial views about the ability of blind magistrates to cope.

"It soon became clear my preconceptions were absolutely ridiculous and that blind magistrates could operate in a very effective way - it was quite a conversion," he said.

Mr Brewer says that the principal difficulty would arise over cases with a high element of visual evidence, such as a dangerous driving

case which hinged on a video filmed from a police helicopter.

"In a case like that, the magistrate would disqualify themselves from hearing it, something magistrates do quite often for a variety of reasons. There is also the concern that magistrates need to see witnesses and defendants so they can read their body language," said Mr Brewer.

"But, first of all, body language is a fairly unreliable measure of truth. Secondly, sighted magistrates are not trained in any structured way

about reading body language, so arguing that it is an essential element of their decision-making is pretty curious. And thirdly, it is open to blind magistrates to judge someone's truthfulness from clues other than visual ones."

Mr Currie, 64, suffers from a deteriorating eye condition diagnosed 40 years ago. He cannot read but has scanned the 200-page Magistrates' Handbook into his computer which can read it back to him. This provides guidance on offences and penalties, given aggravating or mitigating factors, to ensure consistency of sentencing.

"It is fair to say that if I was involved in a motoring case and the whole thing hinged on a photo of a double-decker bus wrapped around a lamp-post, I wouldn't be very good. But they understand this at the court. They know in advance roughly what the evidence is going to be and can steer one away from cases where it is very visual."

"It is also inconceivable that I would sit with my good friend Peter Carr, so in a bench of three, there will always be two sighted magistrates."

Mr Currie also points to another benefit: "The legal establishment is totally mesmerised about whether people are Freemasons. If someone starts making semaphore signals from the dock, it's not going to influence me."

## Jack Straw is just taking liberties

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COURTENAY GRIFFITHS

THIRTY-THREE years ago the Morris Report on Jury Service began with the observation that: "There is, we think, a fundamental conviction in the minds of the public that a jury is in a real sense a safeguard of our liberties. Here is something which reflects the sentiments that have prevailed in this land for so many centuries past."

The Government, in a consultation paper published in July 1998, proposes to further curtail the right to trial by jury in certain "either way" cases - that is, cases in which a defendant can choose between trial in the magistrates' court and trial in the Crown Court.

The transparent motive for the proposed change is cost-cutting. The positive characteristics of summary justice are not legal so much as economic and bureaucratic. Summary justice is fast, easy and cheap.

Trial by jury is too expensive: even justice is now subject to market considerations. Yet this economic imperative is not openly stated, instead we are told that: "The (consultation) paper is concerned not with the merits of jury trial, but only with the defendant's ability to choose it."

This is despite the fact that there has been a steady decrease over the last 10 years in the percentage of either-way cases committed to the Crown Court for trial which arrive there because the defendant exercised personal choice, as opposed to being sent there for trial by the magistrates.

It would appear that the Government is acting in haste and has not fully thought through the implications of this proposal. In particular, its potentially adverse impact on the black community has clearly not been considered. The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, showed sensitivity in setting up the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. Sir William McPherson's eagerly awaited report is expected to make important recommendations aimed at improving the relationship between the black community and the criminal justice system. The Home Secretary evidently sees no connection with his current proposals. Perhaps he is dizzy, brought on by the sudden U-turn he has made.

A mere 22 months ago he said: "Surely, cutting down the right to jury trial, making the system less fair, is not only wrong but short-sighted, and likely to prove ineffective."

There is evidence that the black community will be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes and this could well undermine any future efforts to improve their relationship with the criminal justice system.

Research published by the Runnymede Trust in 1990 showed that of defendants who had a choice, one third of Asian defendants, slightly fewer white defendants, but nearly one half (45 per cent) of Afro-Caribbean defendants chose to be tried in front of a

judge and jury. The authors of the report regarded this difference as "highly statistically significant".

They concluded that: "At the very least, these figures suggest a marked reluctance by Afro-Caribbean defendants - where they have a measure of control - to be tried at the local magistrates' court."

These figures were later confirmed by Roger Hood in a report prepared for the Commission for Racial Equality.

It would further appear that Afro-Caribbean defendants are making an informed and rational decision in removing themselves from the process of magisterial judgement. To begin with, only 2 per cent of magistrates are non-white. Further, the Home Office is currently conducting pilot studies into the differences in outcomes between ethnic groups being tried in magistrates' courts and the Crown Court. This research is still at an early stage; however, initial findings in Leicester Magistrates' Court showed that 13 per cent of black defendants were sentenced to immediate custody for theft offences, compared with 5 per cent of whites.

This is a startling statistic. Further, white defendants were granted unconditional bail at a significantly greater rate than their black counterparts - over 60 per cent compared with 44 per cent for black defendants. Is it any surprise that there is a disproportionate number of blacks in prison?

Does the Government not see the reservoir of resentment which will inevitably begin to build up in a community already convinced that the criminal justice system does not provide justice for them. The jury is the last place in our institutions where the people take a hand in "administering" themselves.

By so doing, they add legitimacy to our system of justice. This is of more than symbolic significance, for as that great 18th-century jurist Blackstone observed:

"Delays and little inconveniences in the forms of justice are the price all free nations must pay for their liberty in more substantial matters."

Courtenay Griffiths QC is a barrister at 2 Garden Court, London EC4

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#### Legal Notices

##### EDMONDSON,

Michael Edmondson

late of Framfield, Uckfield, East Sussex died there on 5 May 1998 (Estate about £25,000).

The Widow, Wilma and the late of the above named are requested to apply to the Treasury Solicitor (BT), Queen Anne's Chambers, 28 Broadway, London SW1H 9US, failing which the Treasury Solicitor may take steps to administer the estate.

#### THE INSOLVENCY RULES 1986

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Dated 19 November 1998

STEPHEN FRANKLIN Liquidator

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## The cost of legal aid reform

Changes made to the legal aid system must be about value for money, says the Law Society president, Michael Mathews. By Linda Tsang

IN ADDITION to modernising his own style of dress, dispensing with stockings and replacing them with trousers (except for ceremonial occasions such as the Queen's Speech this week), the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, has also unveiled the package of proposals as "part of a broader programme of modernising justice", which was included in the Speech.

Most of the proposals to be contained in the Access to Justice Bill have already been trailed in the last year. These include ending the monopoly of barristers appearing in the higher courts, and introducing the Community Legal Service, which would work to match legal services on a local, regional and national basis on a contracted basis to where it is needed.

One of the main purposes of the Bill, and the one that has undoubtedly garnered most of the headlines, is, as the Queen said on Tuesday: "to

modernise legal aid and make it fairer and more cost-effective."

The Lord Chancellor has already made it clear that an overhaul of the legal aid system was on the cards. The Bill, which is likely to be published next week, has led to protests from criminal lawyers because of the proposals to restrict criminal legal aid to lawyers who have been granted contracts to provide advice. About 10,000 outlets provide that kind of advice at present. Under these proposals, figures ranging from between 2,500 and 5,000 have been mentioned as being the possible number of contracts that are likely to be granted.

The argument which has been put forward for the reforms is, that under the current law, any qualified lawyer can do criminal legal aid work and then claim fees according to the work done. This does not guarantee a quality service for defendants, or value for

money for the taxpayer. Under the proposals, the Criminal Defence Service (CDS) is aimed at ensuring that most publicly-funded defence work would be provided by private-sector lawyers under contracts. But the Law Society president, Michael Mathews, says: "The reforms must be about value for money - not cheapness. Legal aid spending is not spiralling out of control. In fact, last year, spending increased by only 1.3 per cent, while the number of people helped increased by 3.2 per cent. The Law Society believes that all competent legal aid firms should be allowed to do legal aid work."

"If the Government imposes arbitrary limits on the number of firms, this will create an unfair restriction on client choice. This is a serious concern in the area of criminal defence work, where a client's ability to choose their own legal representative is a basic human right."

JP 11/10/98



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age and jury. The authors of the report regarded this difference as "highly statistically significant". They concluded that: "At the very least, these figures suggest a marked reluctance of Afro-Caribbean defendants where they have a measure of control - to be tried at the local magistrates' court."

It would further appear that Afro-Caribbean defendants are making an informed and rational decision in removing themselves from the process of magisterial judgement. To begin with, only 2 per cent of magistrates are non-white, further, the Home Office is currently conducting pilot studies into the differences in outcomes between ethnic groups, being tried in the Crown Court. This research bill at an early stage; however, initial findings in Leicester Magistrates' Court showed that 13 per cent of black defendants were sentenced to immediate custody for their offences compared with 5 per cent of whites.

This is a startling statistic further, white defendants are granted unconditional bail at a significantly greater rate than their black counterparts - over 60 per cent compared with 44 per cent for black defendants. It is surprising that there is a disproportionate number of blacks in prison.

Does the Government not see the reservoir of resentment which will inevitably begin to build up in a community already convinced that the criminal justice system does not provide justice for them. The trial is the last place in our institutions where the people are a hand in administering "themselves".

By so doing, they add legitimacy to our system of justice. This is more than symbolic significance, for as the great civil rights lawyer Martin Luther King Jr said: "The only way to change is to change the system."

"Delays and little conveniences in the forms of justice are the price all nations must pay for their liberty in more substantial matters."

Matthew Sweet QC  
a barrister at 2 Garden Court, London EC4

reform  
value for money  
By Linda Tsang

far the taxpayer. Under the Criminal Defence Service, the aim of ensuring that a funded defender work would be a legal and professional. But the Law Society must be about value for money. Legal aid and spending is being cut. In the end, the number of people to be defended by the state is being cut by 32 per cent. The Law Society believes that all competent lawyers should be allowed to do

Government imposes limits on the number of cases an individual can handle. This is a serious case of criminal defence and a client's ability to choose a representative is a basic right.

## NEW FILMS

### ANGEL SHARKS (15)

Director: Manuel Pradal  
Starring: Marina Giocante, Frédéric Maigras  
Pradal's handsome debut feature has seductive surface qualities, and its disjointed scenes of adolescent decadence are engaging. But despite the spirited sex and violence, it's empty, pretentious stuff, a sunny triumph of form over content. West End: ABC Swiss Centre

### DEAD MAN'S CURVE (15)

Director: Dan Rosen  
Starring: Matthew Lillard  
First-time writer-director Rosen must have had some awful experiences at university. All the students at his nameless American college are trying to double-cross and butcher each other, tempted by an obscure regulation that awards straight A-grades to room-mates of suicides. Though not as deliciously nasty as the *Scream* films, *Dead Man's Curve* delivers a respectable quota of drive-in shocks. West End: Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

### THE EEL (18)

Director: Sohei Imamura  
Starring: Koji Yakusho  
Imamura's first film for over 10 years is as slippery as they come. One moment we're watching a taciturn office clerk (Koji Yakusho) caring up his wife, the next we've slithered forward 10 years and he's opening a barber's shop in a remote community. It's often difficult to get a grip on the film's stylistic shifts, but Imamura's determined avoidance of the obvious does him credit. West End: Curzon Soho

### THE FOUNTAINHEAD (PG)

Director: King Vidor  
Starring: Gary Cooper, Raymond Massey, Patricia Neal  
Vidor's monstrously overdesigned melodrama features a miscast Cooper as an architect who takes on Massey's evil corporate boss. Adapted from Ayn Rand's novel, it uses Expressionistic camerawork and cod-Freudian symbolism to construct a bizarre moral message: that we should celebrate the young entrepreneur as a Nietzschean superman. Albert Speer for President, anyone? West End: Curzon Soho

### LES MISÉRABLES (12)

Director: Bill August  
Starring: Liam Neeson, Uma Thurman, Geoffrey Rush  
Bill August turns Victor Hugo's enormous novel into an enormous film, that's as traditional as literary adaptations come these days. It's earnest and almost humourless - those who like a touch of camp to their costume dramas will have to content themselves with a cameo by Nurse from *Blackadder* as Neeson's grunting housekeeper. West End: Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys

### ROMIN (15)

Director: John Frankenheimer  
Starring: Jean Reno, Robert De Niro, Sean Bean  
There's an air of knackered resignation about Frankenheimer's latest movie, an espionage thriller about a gang of mercenaries in pursuit of a mysterious silver suitcase. As the leader of the gang, Robert De Niro does his blank-faced, gristle-chewing act. Sean Bean - as an Andy McNabb type, who uses quaint criminal slang like "swag" - is mercifully dispatched in the second reel. As dull as ditch-water. West End: Barbican Screen, Elephant & Castle Coronet, HammerSmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road

### ROUNDERS (15)

Director: John Dahl  
Starring: Matt Damon, Edward Norton, John Malkovich  
The main problem with Dahl's poker-chub thriller is that the golden-boy star, Matt Damon, is comprehensively out-acted by almost everyone else: by his co-star, Edward Norton, who brings an authentic stiffness to the role of card-sharp best mate; and by the monstrously hammy John Malkovich, as the Muscovite Mr Big. West End: HammerSmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End

### ANTZ (PG)

This computer-animated trifle is surely the most unlikely Woody Allen movie we will ever see. It provides the voice of worker-ant "Z", who breaks out of his totalitarian rut when he falls in with Princess Bala (Sharon Stone). West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, HammerSmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

### BLADE (18)

Monotonous arcade-game thriller about a New York vampire-killer tackling a power-crazed bloodsucker. West End: Elephant & Castle Coronet, HammerSmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

### ELIZABETH (15)

Shekhar Kapur's follow-up to *Bandit Queen* is the story of a female figurehead struggling to gain purchase in a male world. But Kapur largely neglects the opportunities for fun in a story of independence triumphing over cruelty. West End: ABC Baker Street, Clapham Picture House, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

### THE EXORCIST (25TH ANNIVERSARY RELEASE) (18)

Friedrich's seminal horror is still efficiently terrifying. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

### FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (18)

Terry Gilliam's adaptation lags at Ralph Steadman cartoonery for its tale of a drug-fuelled journalistic assignment. The one stand-out is Johnny Depp, who brings Hunter S Thompson to bald-headed, wigged-toed life. West End: ABC Baker Street, Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket

### FIRE (15)

Deepa Mehta's Indian-Canadian co-production mounts a vibrant, at times potent, attack on the Indian family set-up, with its tale of a fractious New Delhi brood. West End: Curzon Soho

### HENRY FOOL (18)

See The Independent Recommends, above. West End: Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Renoir, Richmond Filmhouse, Ritzy Cinema

### HOPE FLOATS (PG)

This winsome piece stars Sandra Bullock as a town-in-the-dumps ex-beauty queen. Cue Gena Rowlands as her mum, Harry Connick Jr as a bashful handyman, and acres of bumper-sticker wisdom. West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

### INSOMNIA (18)

Dubbed a "film blanc" by its creator, *Insomnia* transplants noir stylings to summertime Norway. The cop hero drifts into a mental meltdown as he probes a teenager's murder. West End: Metro

### THE KNOWLEDGE OF HEALING (NC)

Franz Reichle's documentary serves us up with a crash course in Tibetan medicine, but the whole thing proves too info-heavy and indigestible. West End: Renoir

### LEFT LUGGAGE (PG)

Jeroen Krabbé's first stab as a director results in an uncertain soap opera, focusing on the ebbs and flows within a Hasidic family in 1970s Holland. West End: ABC Pantons Street, Curzon Mayfair, Screen on the Hill

### LOCK, STOCK & TWO SMOKING BARRELS (18)

Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels follows the lead of Quentin Tarantino, but the film's defining characteristic is its resilient morality. The picture is peopled by thugs, both amateur and professional. Young Eddy, who comes unstuck in a high-stakes card game, falls into the former category, but Hatchet Harry, to whom he owes \$500,000, is a dangerous old-school pro. West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Screen on the Green, Warner Village West End

### MULAN (U)

A girl disguises herself as a soldier to spare her ailing father from the certain death of combat, in one of the most visually innovative movies that Disney has ever made. West End: Elephant & Castle Coronet, HammerSmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

### MY NAME IS JOE (15)

Ken Loach's solid social-realist drama tells the tale of Joe (Peter Mullan), a recovering alcoholic torn between his old life (drugs, crime) and his new (romance with a middle-class health visitor). *My Name is Joe* brilliantly depicts a Britain caught below the poverty line. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Chelsea Cinema, Gate Notting Hill, Phoenix Cinema, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Screen on the Green, Virgin Haymarket

### THE ODD COUPLE II (15)

The follow-up to Neil Simon's 1960s flat-share favourite dispatches its mismatched couple off to a wedding and then strands them in the desert. All manner of comedy set-pieces result, but the stars work hard to keep it upright. West End: Plaza

### A PERFECT MURDER (15)

This remake of Hitchcock's classic *Dial M for Murder* is not bad at all. Michael Douglas stars as the city shark who blackmails an artist into killing his mistress wife, Gwyneth Paltrow. This is gold-plated trash: the sort of thing Hollywood does better than anyone else. West End: ABC Pantons Street, Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End

### PRIMARY COLORS (15)

See The Independent Recommends, above. West End: Plaza, UCI Whiteleys

### SMALL SOLDIERS (PG)

Children's adventure about a batch of toy soldiers brought to life by a military microchip. Director Joe Dante draws some nice parallels with his own best film, *Gremlins*. West End: HammerSmith Virgin, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero

### SNAKE EYES (15)

Brian De Palma's Atlantic City-set conspiracy thriller plays its mystery plotline as a kind of quickie jigsaw. Our nominal puzzle-solver is Nic Cage's swaggering local cop, whose investigation soon brings him up against Gary Sinise's Navy commander. West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys

### THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY (15)

Ben Stiller and Cameron Diaz star in this latest comedy from the writer-director team of Peter and Bobby Farrelly. The film is basically a romantic comedy of the kind that drifts out of Hollywood on a regular basis. West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero

### THE TRUMAN SHOW (PG)

Peter Weir's comedy about a man (Jim Carrey) who discovers that his whole existence has been broadcast to the world. The film is very funny, due more to the cleverness of Andrew Niccol's script than to its star's presence. West End: Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Virgin Trocadero

## THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS



### Film Lise Spencer

"WHAT WENT down on the way to the top," screams the poster for *Primary Colors* (left). After the Starr Report, you don't really have to watch Mike Nichols' rather respectful political satire to find out what did go down, but it still makes for entertaining viewing. John Travolta, as the sexually incontinent presidential candidate Jack Stanton, gives an uncanny impression of Clinton and Emma Thompson frumps it up as his wife. But the real acting honours go to Adrian Lester as the political ingénue who falls in and out of love with his charismatic boss.

On general release  
Hal Hartley, the arch character of small-town angst, grows up with his new film *Henry Fool*, a gleefully scatological fable about the friendship between a visionary stranger and a lowly garbage man. Losing his ironic cool, at last, Hartley creates his first full-blooded hero in the wonderfully ramshackle figure of Henry, played to perfection by Thomas Jay Ryan. On general release

### Theatre Dominic Cavendish

YOU CAN see why Connor Lovett has been compared to the likes of Eddie Izzard and Ardal O'Hanlon, as well as great Samuel Beckett (*Redoubt*). Interpreters such as Patrick McGee and Barry McGovern. Lovett delivers extracts from the 1951 novel *Mollsey* with a beautiful business which perfectly accommodates the absurd one-liners, the coarse gallows humour and speculative riddling of this lost soul, hobbling his way to his old ma, "whose charity kept me dying".  
*Riverside Studios, London W6*  
(0171-420 0000) 7.45pm  
Method and Madness's version of James Ellroy's *The Black Dahlia* attempts to cram in as many of the savage plot-twists surrounding the obsessive central murder investigation as possible. But director Mike Alfreds still cranks up the tension with a dynamic visual approach which relishes Ellroy's dystopian vision of Forties LA.  
*Poodle Arts Centre, Dorset*  
(01202 685 222) 7.45pm



## CINEMA

### WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET  
(0870-9020418) • Baker Street  
Elizabeth 2.20pm, 5.20pm,  
8.10pm Fear and Loathing in Las  
Vegas 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.15pm

ABC PANTON STREET  
(0870-902 0404) • Piccadilly  
Circus The Last Days of Disco  
1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.35pm  
Left Luggage 1.15pm, 3.40pm,  
6.10pm, 8.40pm A Perfect  
Murder 2.40pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm  
Rien Ne Va Plus 1.15pm, 3.35pm,  
6.05pm, 8.35pm

ABC PICCADILLY  
(0171-287 4322) (from 1pm)  
(0171-727 6705) • Notting Hill  
Gate Elizabeth 2pm, 5pm,  
8.35pm

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE  
(0870-902 0402) • Leicester  
Square/Tottenham Court Road  
The Governor 2pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm  
Hope Floats 1.15pm, 3.45pm,  
6.05pm, 8.40pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE  
(0870-902 0403) • Leicester  
Square Angel Sharks 1.20pm,  
3.15pm, 5.10pm, 7.05pm, 9pm  
Le Bossu 1pm, 3.30pm, 5pm,  
8.30pm Heat 4.25pm, 8.50pm  
Love Is the Devil 2.20pm, 6.40pm  
La Vie Revee des Anges 1.40pm,  
4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT  
ROAD  
(0870-902 0414) • Tottenham  
Court Road Antz 1.25pm,  
3.25pm, 5.25pm, 7.25pm,  
9.45pm The Exorcist (25th  
Anniversary Release) 1.10pm,  
3.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm  
My Name is Joe 1.15pm, 4pm,  
6.40pm

BARBICAN SCREEN  
(0171-638 8891) • Barbican The  
Big Country 5.30pm, 8.30pm  
3pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm A Soldier's  
Daughter Never Cries 6pm,  
8.40pm Scene Relict: A New  
Musical Language 6pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE  
(0171-498 3323) • Clapham  
Common Elizabeth 2pm, 4.15pm,  
6.45pm, 9.15pm Fear and  
Loathing in Las Vegas 3.30pm,  
6.30pm Henry Fool 12.30pm,  
3.15pm, 6pm, 8.45pm La Vie  
Revee des Anges 4pm, 9pm

CURZON MAYFAIR  
(0171-368 1720) • Green Park  
Left Luggage 1.15pm, 3.45pm,  
6.15pm, 8.45pm

CURZON SOHO  
(0171-734 2255) (12pm-6pm)  
(0171-734 2255) • Curzon Soho  
The Eel 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm,  
9.15pm Fire 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm,  
8.30pm The Fountainhead 2pm,  
4.30pm, 7pm Henry Fool 3.15pm,  
6.15pm, 9pm

ELPHANT AND CASTLE  
CORONET  
(0171-708 4968) • Elephant &  
Castle Antz 4pm, 6pm, 8.45pm  
Blade 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm  
Roulin 3.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQUARE  
(0990-888990) • Leicester  
Square Antz 2pm, 4.10pm,  
6.30pm, 8.40pm Fear and  
Loathing in Las Vegas 12.30pm,  
3.30pm, 6.10pm, 9pm Sliding  
Doors 1pm, 3.20pm, 5.40pm,  
8pm

GATE NOTTING HILL  
(0171-727 4043) • Notting Hill  
Gate My Name is Joe 1.15pm,  
3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.50pm (+ Short:  
The Man Who Held His Breath)

HAMMERSMITH VIRGIN  
(0870-907 0718) • Ravenscourt  
Park/Hammersmith Antz 2.30pm,  
4.40pm, 6.40pm, 8.40pm Blade  
3.20pm, 6pm, 8.50pm Mulan  
1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm,  
10.10pm, 12.10pm Rounders 1pm,  
3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm Small  
Soldiers 1pm

ICA CINEMA  
(0171-930 3647) • Charing Cross  
Nightmares in a Damaged Brain  
5pm, 8pm, 10.30pm  
Censorship: Past and Present  
Panel Discussion 7pm Schramm  
8.30pm Wreckers of Civilization:  
Censorship Event 9pm-1am  
Zombie Holocaust 9pm

## CINEMA

### WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET  
(0870-9020418) • Baker Street  
Elizabeth 2.20pm, 5.20pm,  
8.10pm Fear and Loathing in Las  
Vegas 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.15pm

ABC PANTON STREET  
(0870-902 0404) • Piccadilly  
Circus The Last Days of Disco  
1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.35pm  
Left Luggage 1.15pm, 3.40pm,  
6.10pm, 8.40pm A Perfect  
Murder 2.40pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm  
Rien Ne Va Plus 1.15pm, 3.35pm,  
6.05pm, 8.35pm

ABC PICCADILLY  
(0171-287 4322) (from 1pm)  
(0171-727 6705) • Notting Hill  
Gate Elizabeth 2pm, 5pm,  
8.35pm

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE  
(0870-902 0402) • Leicester  
Square/Tottenham Court Road  
The Governor 2pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm  
Hope Floats 1.15pm, 3.45pm,  
6.05pm, 8.40pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE  
(0870-902 0403) • Leicester  
Square Angel Sharks 1.20pm,  
3.15pm, 5.10pm, 7.05pm, 9pm  
Le Bossu 1pm, 3.30pm, 5pm,  
8.30pm Heat 4.25pm, 8.50pm  
Love Is the Devil 2.20pm, 6.40pm  
La Vie Revee des Anges 1.40pm,  
4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT  
ROAD  
(0870-902 0414) • Tottenham  
Court Road Antz 1.25pm,  
3.25pm, 5.25pm, 7.25pm,  
9.45pm The Exorcist (25th  
Anniversary Release) 1.10pm,  
3.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm  
My Name is Joe 1.15pm, 4pm,  
6.40pm

BARBICAN SCREEN  
(0171-638 8891) • Barbican The  
Big Country 5.30pm, 8.30pm  
3pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm A Soldier's  
Daughter Never Cries 6pm,  
8.40pm Scene Relict: A New  
Musical Language 6pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE  
(0171-498 3323) • Clapham  
Common Elizabeth 2pm, 4.15pm,  
6.45pm, 9.15pm Fear and  
Loathing in Las Vegas 3.30pm,  
6.30pm Henry Fool 12.30pm,  
3.15pm, 6pm, 8.45pm La Vie  
Revee des Anges 4pm, 9pm

CURZON MAYFAIR  
(0171-368 1720) • Green Park  
Left Luggage 1.15pm, 3.45pm,  
6.15pm, 8.45pm

CURZON SOHO  
(0171-734 2255) (12pm-6pm)  
(0171-734 2255) • Curzon Soho  
The Eel 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm,  
9.15pm Fire 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm,  
8.30pm The Fountainhead 2pm,  
4.30pm, 7pm Henry Fool 3.15pm,  
6.15pm, 9pm

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THURSDAY TELEVISION

**THE THURSDAY REVIEW**  
The Independent 26 November 1991

## BBG1

## BBQZ

## ITV Carlton

## Channel 4

## Channel 5

**SERENA  
MACKEYS**  
**TELEVISION REVIEW**



This was a successful start to the series, giving the me too-ers a little light and a little between-the-dicks and northiness. It gives rise to an interesting thought, do we develop clothing, not because of the misplaced prudery claimed by nationalists, but because we can't bear to have strangers see us wobble? Clothed self-congratulation was the theme of *Omibooks: The Virtue of Vanity Part ABCD*, which made use of unlimited access to clips from the current

by making his protagonists as "Mashed" (E.C.2). Despite the fact that the Machine operators were, in the main, uneducated primitives, they got round the decency law, in much the same way as the Victorians went happy to dress a naked female statue as long as she had no form, at 10 p.m. Two scored initially, more human than any of the naked-and-provide-I-don't-know film. But the programme's makers encouraged participants, or edited their film to highlight the human tendency to suffer from self-loathing, but the study of people's attitudes to their middle-aged bodies was both comic and melancholy. By turns. Only the couple who had huge amounts of plastic surgery to shave maybe five years of their faces were seen obsessively purging from to keep those bodies in trim. Everyone else discussed their drooping, appendicitis-like with remarkable charm and humour as the camera focused on thy details: an expandoctory scar; nose, a dismembered hat; bubble ball of hot grey strands. "You know when you buy wood-chip wallpaper, before you paint it, you sell one chip who sell it, a uncuttingly-etched cabin kitchen. Everything looks a bit like that, really." Oh, I do know

One didn't learn much about human nature, apart from the fact that some people will take just about any opportunity to spoil in someone on the telly, but the revelation that *Discreetly* was every bit the snob has jamopped in the texts was an amusingly disreputable. Well, takes one to know one, as *Tri* sure Betty Sharp would have said.

# ROCKY

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\*Super VHS delivers 440 lines of resolution versus standard VHS's 250 lines.

**JVC**

## DOCUMENTARY OF THE DAY

**SEAT ROUTE** (from SE22) If you can ignore the understandable pain of the title, Josh Groban's new musical travel series has much to offer. A highlight of the first programme is a trip to the Statue Park on the outskirts of New York, the perfect place for gigantonic representations of Michelangelo's David. The second, set in Hungary, offers us his two most beloved (right) is this tale of Hungary – "Willis You Have to Land the programme as an opportunity to see the most beautiful country in the world. The programme is a long time to fill with just a few of the numerous musical interludes are a welcome feature. On the whole, it's bit of a muddle, but Josh is better than Judith Chalfont.

## BEAUTY SHOW OF THE DAY



**MISS WORLD** (9pm Co., *16m*) What's 49 years old based in the Seychelles and doesn't wear a swimsuit? The Miss World competition is pure Chance! It's zig-zagging along this line between snuffiness and post-modern credibility—lacking a strong theme, Marjorie Marples, if you know, the queen of the nation next to the Regent's, hands in 16-year-old toast from Liverpool. The contestants, all of whom have to be single, childless and between the ages of 17 and 24, have been working in the sun for a month now, learning how to, well, live on stages and anticipate a chat with the host, Eyzene's Noma Ndebele. In a Eurovision Song Contest kind of way.

## FILM OF THE DAY



**THE NERVO MANIO** (3:30pm, CBS) A bizarre piece of scheduling from our "Idiosyncratic Friends at Channel 4" series, *Manio's Follow-Up to Ecstasy* (later, it'll be a w in the traditional sense), but the genre's themes and its characters are examined in uncommon depth, especially in the latter stages. *Manio* (right) stars ex-officer Vicky Collier, who is treated with suspicion by his wife (Vivien Brown) after seven years away. Warren Oates supports as the Airtel. Some of the more straight-faced comments are this: "Warren Oates, I don't believe a word of it. It's a lino example of the catchall, cowboy film."



- [illegible]

**TELEVISION GUIDE BY PETER CONCINE**